Yakuwarigo Knowledge among Learners of Japanese in a JSL Context

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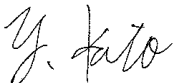
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Statement of Candidate

This thesis has not been submitted for a degree at any other university nor institution other than Macquarie University. The thesis also provides all information sources which have been used as references.

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Abstract

Yakuwarigo (role language) is a form of Japanese language use which embodies particular characteristics of certain types of speakers. Consequently, most Japanese speakers who have grown up in Japan are able to identify particular character types simply by hearing or reading their Japanese, with or without visual images. *Yakuwarigo* is in fact essential knowledge for people who belong to a Japanese community since its members apply such knowledge when communicating with each other. Despite this, only a few *yakuwarigo* studies have been conducted from a Japanese language education perspective, and little is therefore known regarding *yakuwarigo* knowledge among learners of Japanese. This qualitative study investigates the depth of *yakuwarigo* knowledge and possible acquisition processes among a small cohort of learners living in Japan and studying Japanese as a second language. Data analysis reveals that participants possess a certain level of *yakuwarigo* knowledge, much of which has been acquired with the aid of resources that the participants access for enjoyment, rather than through formal classroom language learning. For these participants, Japanese manga and anime often play an initial role as a source of *yakuwarigo* input. This *yakuwarigo* knowledge is then reinforced by applying it in different contexts. Additionally, the findings highlight that noticing the existence of *yakuwarigo* is essential for its acquisition. This study provides another perspective in the field of *yakuwarigo* and opportunities to open Japanese educationalists to the importance of *yakuwarigo* for second language learners of Japanese.

Chapter 1:   Introduction

1.1.   The Current Condition of the Field of Japanese Language Education

Compared to past decades, the field of Japanese language education draws on Japanese pop culture, particularly Japanese comics (manga) and Japanese animation (anime). Armour (2011) notes that manga and anime "are now becoming the standard choice for curriculum designers, material developers, classroom teachers and Japanese language learners" (p.128). As evidence for this, in Australia, the Japanese animation movie, *Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi* (Spirited Away), was used as part of course materials for the HSC Japanese Extension Course from 2009 to 2013. In addition, Inahara, McCagg, Tohsaku, and Vergel (2009) have written the Japanese textbook, *Doraemon no Dokodemo Nihongo*, based on one of the most famous manga and anime characters in Japan. This trend toward paying attention to manga and anime as learning resources seems to reflect the increasing popularity of these products around the world. Both manga and anime, moreover, play a role in motivating their fans to learn the Japanese language (Armour & Iida 2014; Kumano, 2010; Northwood & Thomson, 2012; The Japan Foundation, 2013). Japanese educationalists attempted to use manga and anime for teaching Japanese grammar, onomatopoeia and culture. In other words, they try to "teach Japanese with manga and anime" (Kumano, 2011, p. 117, author's translation). Nevertheless, Kumano (2011) also points out what is missing from these approaches to incorporation of manga and anime into language learning curricula is the attention to the language used by various characters. Learners of Japanese often wish to learn the kind of Japanese which appears in manga and anime associated with a certain character (Kumano, 2010: Kumano & Hirokaga, 2008).

1.2. Background to the Study

The Japanese which frequently appears in manga and anime and is associated with particular characteristics of certain types of speakers is known as *yakuwarigo* (role language), a term coined by Kinsui (2003). Teshigawara and Kinsui define *yakuwarigo* as "a set of spoken language features, vocabulary, grammar, phonetic characteristics, etc., that are associated with a particular character type" (2011, p.39). However, both Kumano (2011) and Kinsui (2011) comment that the Japanese educational field and some Japanese teachers seem to be less interested in teaching such language in the classroom context. Some teachers consider that teaching *yakuwarigo* might lead to inappropriate language use among their learners (Kumano, 2011) or regard *yakuwarigo* not as real language use, but rather as just fictional language (Kinsui, 2011). These biases against *yakuwarigo* may be one element of the perception gap between the Japanese education field and Japanese learners who are motivated to study Japanese by anime and manga. Nevertheless, the divergent views raise two controversial points. Does *yakuwarigo* really lead to inappropriate language use among Japanese learners, and is *yakuwarigo* really just fictional language? The answer in both cases is almost certainly no, since *yakuwarigo* can be seen in conversations among native Japanese speakers and in many Japanese products, especially those associated with Japanese pop culture. Thus, y*akuwarigo* can be regarded as an important aspect of the Japanese language, yet learners of Japanese in many formal learning contexts are provided few opportunities to learn such language.

1.3. Aims of the Research

As argued above, *yakuwarigo* is an important aspect of Japanese, but we know very little about the kind of knowledge that Japanese learners have about *yakuwarigo*. Most studies

of *yakuwarigo* has been conducted from a "pure" linguistics viewpoint rather than from the perspective of Japanese language teaching. Two exceptions to this are quantitative studies conducted by Jung (2007) and Shukuri et al. (2015) to measure Japanese learners' *yakuwarigo* knowledge (discussed in more detail in the next chapter). However, due to the absence of qualitative research focusing on *yakuwarigo* knowledge among Japanese learners, it is still uncertain how much or what kind of *yakuwarigo* knowledge learners have and how they acquire such knowledge. The present research, a qualitative in-depth case study of three participants studying at a Japanese language institution in Japan, explores such issues and seeks to address two research questions:

1. What depth of knowledge in terms of *yakuwarigo* do these Japanese learners in a Japanese as a Second Language (JSL) context have?

2. How do these learners acquire such knowledge?

The reasons for selecting JSL learners as target participants for this study is the amount of available learning resources. Many Japanese learners receive little or no exposure to *yakuwarigo* inside the classroom; therefore, out-of-class learning is likely to play a significant role. The second language context generally offers more learning possibilities to learners than the foreign language context does (Menezes, 2011). The second research question is examined from an ecological perspective to investigate possible *yakuwarigo* acquisition processes among participants in a way that does not separate them from their environment. It is hoped that the findings of this research will bring about another perspective for the research field, and provide Japanese educationalists with opportunities for serious consideration as to whether *yakuwarigo* can be part of "the target language" in the Japanese classroom.

1.4. Thesis Organisation

This thesis contains six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the main concept of this study by explaining the current condition of the Japanese language education field and background to the research reported in the thesis. The research aims are also proposed. Chapter 2 presents a review of the relevant literature. It explores in detail what *yakuwarigo* is, and examines the relations between *yakuwarigo* and the Japanese language education, followed by an overview of the ecological approach which serves as an analytical framework for the study. Chapter 3 describes and justifies the research methods used in this study, as well as outlining the processes of recruitment, data collection, and analysis. In Chapter 4, the findings that emerged from the analysis from each phrase of the study are presented, and salient common findings are summarised at the end of this chapter. Chapter 5 discusses two key findings in more detail; these relate to the possible acquisition processes of *yakuwarigo* and the potential advantages of teaching *yakuwarigo* in the classroom. Chapter 6 summarises the current study and its broader implications, and notes the limitations as well as setting out recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2:   Literature Review

This chapter focuses on two main concepts: (1) *yakuwarigo* and (2) ecological approaches to researching language learning. The concept of *yakuwarigo* is considered from different angles, including the concept of stereotyping, the functions of *yakuwarigo*, its status in Japanese language education, and *yakuwarigo* knowledge among learners of Japanese. Principles of the ecological approach used as theoretical framework for the research are reviewed later in this chapter. An outline of what constitutes an ecological approach is provided, and advantages of this approach for investigating language learning are outlined. The notion of "affordances", a key element of the ecological approach used here, is also explored.

2.1.   Concept of *Yakuwarigo*

Yakuwarigo (or "role language" in English) is a characteristic form of spoken language that generally appears in Japanese comics (manga) or animation (anime). Teshigawara and Kinsui (2011) have defined *yakuwarigo* as "a set of spoken language features, vocabulary, grammar, phonetic characteristics, etc., that are associated with a particular character type" (p.39). Further explanation of *yakuwarigo* with actual examples is provided below.

(1) *Sō-ja   washi ga   shit-teoru-zo*
yes-COPULA   I   NOM know-ASPECT-PARTICLE

(2) *Sō-yo   atashi ga   shit-teiru-wa*
yes-[ZERO COPULA]-PARTICLE   I   NOM   know-ASPECT-PARTICLE

(3) *Sō-da   ore   ga   shit-teru-ze*

yes-COPULA   I   NOM   know-ASPECT-PARTICLE

(Kinsui, 2009, p. 14 cited in Teshigawara & Kinsui, 2011, p. 37)

The meaning of all example sentences in English are "Yes, I know", but such a translation provides no information related to the identity of speakers. Although the three Japanese statements above have the same meaning, some differences are evident in particular elements which enable the reader to associate each of them with a different type of speaker: (1) an elderly male, (2) a female, and (3) a macho guy. The grammatical elements that contribute to distinguishing the speakers are combinations of the copula, first-person, and aspect and final particle. For sentence (1), the copula is "*ja*", the-first person is "*washi*", and the aspect and final particle is "*teoru-zo*". For sentence (2), first final particle is "*yo*", the first-person is "*atashi*", and the aspect and second final particle is "*teiru-wa*". Lastly, for sentence (3), the copula is "*da*", the first-person is "*ore*", and the aspect and final particle is "*teru-ze*". By applying the definition of Teshigawara and Kinsui (2011), these examples illustrate how native Japanese speakers are successfully able to identify the characters by the differences in these sentences. In short, the term *yakuwarigo* refers to unique patterns in elements of sentence construction related to a particular character.

A great number of *yakuwarigo* can be observed in many different contexts, such as Japanese pop culture products (e.g., manga and anime) and conversation among Japanese community members. However, due to the nature of *yakuwarigo* that frequently appears in fictional products, it is often considered as fictional language. It is true that it would be

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very rare to encounter in the real world an elderly male who speaks "elderly male *yakuwarigo*" which is similar to the sample provided above. In the real-life context, unique patterns which are strongly associated a particular character are infrequent. The "degree of *yakuwarigo*" (Kinsui, 2003, p.67, author's translation) refers to the level of involvement of speech styles to identify its associated speakers (Kinsui, 2003). In brief, the higher the degree of *yakuwarigo* is, the more easily speakers can be identified. Popular culture products generally contain higher degrees of *yakuwarigo* than one encounters in the real world.

If high-degree *yakuwarigo* rarely appears in the real context (this is actually not exactly true and is considered later in this chapter), how about low-degree *yakuwarigo*? Some elements of *yakuwarigo* can be seen in conversations among Japanese community members. For example, many Japanese use "*boku*" (one component of boy *yakuwarigo*) or "*ore*" (macho or scrapper *yakuwarigo*) as their first-person pronoun, and the final particle "*zo*" (macho or scrapper *yakuwarigo*) is also commonly used. From the definition of *yakuwarigo* proposed by Teshigawara and Kinsui (2011), one of the most important parts of *yakuwarigo* is its implication of a particular character type. Although some parts of *yakuwarigo*, such as provided above, are less clear when used in isolation than higher degrees of *yakuwarigo* would be, they can still be associated with a particular character type, and can thus be regarded as lower degrees of *yakuwarigo*.

From the perspective of degree, we can (as discussed above) talk in terms of high-degree *yakuwarigo* and low-degree *yakuwarigo*. I defined *yakuwarigo* previously as set of spoken language which has unique patterns in elements of sentence construction related

to particular characters. This often refers high-degree *yakuwarigo*. In addition to this definition, the present research regards the language which frequently appears in conversations among Japanese community and is also associated with some character images or attributes as low-degree *yakuwarigo*, and both types are treated as *yakuwarigo* in this thesis.

In the next section, the way in which *yakuwarigo* contributes to identifying a particular character is explored. One possible way in which this occurs relates to *yakuwarigo* as a form of linguistic stereotyping shared by a group and its members (Kinsui, 2003).

2.2. Stereotypes

Stereotypes refer to images or attributions assigned to a group that are simplified (Beeghly, 2015) and generalised (Cox, Abramson, Devine, & Hollon, 2017). For instance, some people in the Western world may hold stereotypical images of Japanese people as polite or hard-working. Simplification and generalisation of images occur by categorisation of individuals as members of a group. Stereotyping is perceived as process of categorisation (Tajfel, 1969; 1981) in the field of social psychology. Applying the perspective of categorisation to the Japanese examples provided above, although vast numbers of different characteristics are found among Japanese people if they are seen as individuals, they are sometimes categorised into one particular group which ignores their individual characteristics by allocating stereotypes (simplified and generalised information).

One of the crucial features of stereotypes is the element of sharing. Regarding the stereotypical formation of a social group, the images must be shared not only at an

individual level but also at a group level (Stangor, & Schaller, 1996) and fitted in norms or perspectives of the group (McGarty, Yzerbyt, & Spears, 2002). In other words, stereotyping occurs by applying images stored in an individual's mind; however, such images, or stereotypes, are formed in a way that reflects the beliefs of a larger group.

2.3. Linguistic Stereotypes

Here *yakuwarigo* is explored by applying features of stereotypes, simplification, generalisation, categorization and sharing. From the viewpoint of *yakuwarigo*, a character is categorised as a member of a social group rather than being treated as an individual. Furthermore, simplified and generalised speech styles are allocated to particular social groups and their members as their characteristics, which helps native Japanese speakers identify the particular speaker. Japanese community members therefore share knowledge of these characteristic speech styles, and they apply this knowledge on an individual level. The ubiquitous nature of stereotypes (Bordalo, Coffman, Gennaioli, & Shleifer, 2016), together with the parallels between *yakuwarigo* and stereotypes, means that *yakuwarigo* can be regarded as a form of linguistic stereotyping.

2.4. Formation of Stereotypes and Evolution of Language

The processes by which linguistic stereotypes are formed, as well as the processes of maintaining such stereotypes, are explored before consideration of how *yakuwarigo* forms and prevails within Japanese society.

Stereotypes and language are part of the social heritage of a particular community and are transmitted from generation to generation. Stereotypes are therefore shared by members

of a group and reflect their beliefs. Research regarding the social transmission of stereotypes has been conducted by Martin et al. (2014). Their findings have shown that social information is successfully transmitted intergenerationally, and during the process of transmission, the information takes on simpler, more structured and more learnable forms. Furthermore, these changes occur spontaneously rather than intentionally. Thus, it can be said that the features of stereotypes are the fallout of the process of social transmission. This social transmission perspective can also be applied to language evolution. The way in which languages evolve from generation to generation has been explored by Kirby, Cornish and Smith (2008) using an artificial language in a laboratory setting. Their research has indicated the possibility that language formation by social transmission follows the patterns of stereotype formation explained above.

One of the most important factors in the formation and maintenance of stereotypes is the media (Arendt, 2013). In contemporary society, enormous amounts of information are provided through a diverse range of media, including traditional print media, as well as visual, electronic and social media. The function of the media is not only to reflect society, but also to form the society itself (Spitzberg, & Cadiz, 2002). For example, in the US, there are gaps between proportion of racial groups depicted on TV and the actual proportions of racial groups that make up the society (Mastro, 2015). Caucasian American characters are likely to be more depicted than their actual proportion, while Latinos, Asian American and Native American characters are often portrayed much less frequently than their actual proportion. In this condition, the possible contribution of media to the formation of stereotypes, especially about social groups, is difficult to deny (Mastro, 2009; 2015; Tukachinsky, Mastro, & Yarchi, 2015).

As discussed earlier, one theory of stereotype formation is that the sources of stereotypes (social information) change in the course of social transmission into simpler, more structured and more learnable forms. Repeated and wide dissemination of the information by the media then results in reinforcement of this information among members of a particular group. Importantly, stereotypes influence not only the minds of adults, but also the minds of children, since the formation of stereotypes can be observed in early childhood (Bigler, & Liben, 2007; Trautner et al., 2005).

2.5. Formation of *Yakuwarigo*

This section considers the processes of formation and maintenance of the *yakuwarigo* shared by native Japanese speakers. The formation and maintenance model of *yakuwarigo* proposed by Kinsui (2008) accords quite well with the processes by which stereotypes evolve, as explored above. The formative processes of *yakuwarigo* can be broadly divided into two types. The first type of *yakuwarigo* originates from language or specific expressions, such as dialects, lexicons or registers, used by members of social groups in reality. These language forms and expressions evolve into simpler and more learnable forms in the process of the social transmission, and the transmitted forms are used repeatedly as part of the spoken language of a particular character type (Kinsui, 2014). The other type of *yakuwarigo* originates from creators or authors without any "real-life" models, and is generally associated with non-human characters, such as robots, ghosts and aliens (Kinsui, 2014).

In terms of acquisition of *yakuwarigo* among native Japanese, it is able to be acquired in early childhood through the media (Kinsui, 2003). The salient feature of *yakuwarigo* is

its frequent appearance in popular culture products, such as manga, anime and picture books (Kinsui, 2003; 2007; Yamaguchi, 2007), and there are many such products targeting children. As a result of this, *yakuwarigo* (which has evolved to be learnable even for children in the course of social transmission) is acquired by Japanese children, and their knowledge of *yakuwarigo* is generally reinforced by their repeated consumption of popular culture products. The term "consumption" is used here to refer to the reception of and engagement with a particular form of entertainment. Evidence for this formative process can be found in research conducted by Suga (2011 cited by Kinsui 2013). She used a matching test to investigate *yakuwarigo* knowledge among three and five year-old native Japanese children in Japan with voice data and pictures of characters. While test scores among three year-old children did not show any evidence of acquisition of *yakuwarigo*, most of the five year-old children successfully associated *yakuwarigo* with particular characters. These findings suggest that native Japanese speakers acquire *yakuwarigo* in early childhood, even though they do not go to the issue of how this *yakuwarigo* knowledge is acquired.

2.6. Function of Stereotypes

The role of stereotypes in human life is discussed, followed by an exploration of function of *yakuwarigo*.

The impact of stereotypes on human life tends to be seen not as a blessing but rather as a curse. The reason for this is that while stereotypes help people to process information, they also cause prejudice formation. Blum (2004) make the strong claim that categorisation where individuals are seen as merely one member of a group is morally

wrong. Furthermore, the validity of stereotypes (i.e., images and attributions) allocated to a particular group is highly questionable, as even though stereotypes are often formed by reflection of the observable characteristics in reality, stereotypes do not generally correspond with these original characteristics (Bordalo et al., 2016). Stereotypes are indeed often regarded as over-simplified, over-structured, over-exaggerated and over-modified images (Judd & Park, 1993). Another criticism of stereotypes is that they tend to facilitate negative emotions, with prejudice being a prime example (McGarty et al., 2002). A possible mechanism by which stereotypes lead to prejudice is shortcut information processing, described below.

Martin et al (2014) claim that reduction of the cognitive burden in one's information processing is the salient feature of the function of stereotypes. While individuals are able to obtain and process some information simultaneously, the amount of information to which they are exposed is often massive. For this reason, processing all information is considered impossible since cognitive capacities of individuals (such as the ability to attend to, sense and recall information that is essential for processing information) are limited (Martin et al, 2014). In order to overcome these limitations, various information about individuals is ignored by categorising individuals into particular groups. This simplified information results in saving cognitive resources and reducing one's cognitive burden (McGarty et al., 2002). Due to this shortcut thought process, stereotypes are likely to be ascribed as the cause of prejudice formation, or regarded as prejudice itself. This shortcut information processing is, nevertheless, the crucial function and the motive for the formation of stereotypes themselves. The function of stereotypes to reduce cognitive burden brings great benefits for individuals to understand their environments (Bordalo, et

al., 2016; McGarty et al., 2002; Hilton, & Von Hippel, 1996). That is, individuals are able to introduce shortcut information processing by drawing on stereotypes, which are simplified images of a group. Therefore, stereotypes allow individuals to understand their environment more easily and efficiently.

2.7. *Yakuwarigo* in the Fictional World

As mentioned above, *yakuwarigo* frequently appears in popular culture products, such as manga, anime and picture books. The *yakuwarigo* encountered in these contexts is often high-degree *yakuwarigo*, which is stereotyped and therefore not the same as actual language use by real speakers encountered in daily life (Gaubatz, 2007; Kinsui, 2003; 2007). One reason for the frequent appearance of *yakuwarigo* in popular culture products is that the application of the function of *yakuwarigo* helps consumers and creators of the productions to focus more on its story (Yamaguchi, 2007). As with the function of stereotypes, *yakuwarigo* facilitates information processing for the audience by reducing their cognitive burden. Yamaguchi (2007) has explained this function introducing two types of communication that appear in fiction: (1) micro-cosmic communication and (2) macro-cosmic communication. The former refers to the communication conducted between characters in a story, while the latter refers to the communication from creators to consumers of a product. He also comments that *yakuwarigo* is unnatural language use from the perspective of micro-cosmic communication, as it differs from the actual language that would be used by the characters in real life. In contrast, *yakuwarigo* is effective language for macro-cosmic communication since it allows consumers to achieve immediate understanding of the conversation participants without deep consideration. Hence, consumers are able to focus on the contents of the story (Yamaguchi, 2007). As

yakuwarigo gives consumers clues about who the speaker is and the speaker's attributes, it allows more space for the processing capacities of the readers or viewers. As a result of this, creators benefit from *yakuwarigo* as a means to convey their messages to consumers efficiently. The benefit is maximised when *yakuwarigo* is introduced into popular culture products because these productions tend to be heavily consumed from early childhood (Kinsui, 2003) when cognitive abilities are in a growing phase (Bjorklund, & Causey, 2017). Owing to emphasis on macro-cosmic communication in the fictional world, unnatural language, *yakuwarigo*, as viewed from the perspectives of micro-cosmic communication is thought to be part of the natural order in popular culture products. In summary, *yakuwarigo* in the fictional world reduces the reader or viewer's cognitive burden by providing information about the speakers (macro-cosmic communication). It therefore helps both consumers and creators concentrate more on the story.

2.8. *Yakuwarigo* in the Real World

The frequent appearance of *yakuwarigo* in the fictional world has been discussed above. However, it is important to note that *yakuwarigo* is not only observed in the fictional world but also in real-world interactions. The function of *yakuwarigo* in the real world is empowerment of its users to evoke the stereotypes of particular characters as they have been socially constructed.

Different usage of *yakuwarigo* by native Japanese speakers depends on the way they wish to be seen by others. Kinsui (2003) describes this using the result of the survey of 18 university students about their first person use as an example. According to him, these university students were prone to use "*boku*" or "*ore*" as the first-person pronoun to

communicate with family members or friends, whereas they preferred to use "*watashi*" or "*boku*" in front of lecturers, but would not use "*ore*" in this context. Most of them indicated that they would use "*watashi*" in a job interview. Additionally, images associated with "*boku*" were humbleness and childishness, whereas a macho image was associated with users of "*ore*". Even though this data cannot be generalised to other situations due to the number of participants and the methods of the research, these findings illustrate some of the ways in which Japanese speakers make use of different *yakuwarigo* to express themselves in consideration of contexts and conversation partners.

2.9. *Yakuwarigo* and Identity

The function of *yakuwarigo* is reconsidered here by applying the concept of identity. "*Self-identity* refers to salient and enduring aspects of one's self-perception" (Rise, Sheeran, & Hukkelberg, 2010, p. 1087), that often becomes the answer to the question of "who am I?", and functions as a reference for an individual (Eryigit, & Kerpelman, 2011). In fact, identity is all about oneself, yet in order to develop one's identity, self-categorisation into social categories, such as sociodemographic characteristics, social roles, social types and personality traits (Rise et al, 2010), is needed (Stets, & Burke, 2000). Identity is an extremely complex concept, and may aspects of this concepts fall outside the scope of the present study. For the purposes of this thesis, the discussion here focuses on aspects of "identity" that relate to the social roles that individuals perform, as well as the ways in which they wish to present themselves to others. Considering the previous example of male university students, several elements of social categories required to develop an individual's identity can be found. Examples include the first person use of "*boku*" or "*ore*" as a family member (1), or a friend (2); "*boku*" or "*watashi*"

as a student (3); "*watashi*" as a student job-seeker (4); "*boku*" as a humble person (5); and "*ore*" as a macho guy (6). The use of these different forms allows individuals to tailor their utterances to fit the particular context where the current conversation takes place; in other words, these students express their identities through *yakuwarigo*. Kinsui (2011) has claimed that a person is generally composed of multiple faces (e.g., wife, mother and teachers), which each have their own set of spoken language considered as *yakuwarigo*. The concept of "faces" here reflects the possible roles that an individual may be projecting at any given time. Therefore, it can be said that people express their identities (social roles) depending on the way they wish to be seen by others using *yakuwarigo*. Edwards (1985) has indicated two different functions that language possesses: (1) a communicative function, and (2) a symbolic function. The communicative function refers to contents of conversation itself, while the symbolic function refers to identities of speakers. From this perspective, *yakuwarigo* is regarded as language that fulfils the symbolic function.

Individuals who live in a Japanese community are likely to draw on *yakuwarigo* for expression of their identities. For instance, users of "*boku*" as the first-person pronoun may be attempting to express their identity of humbleness by evoking images that "*boku*" has, whereas users of "*ore*" may reflect images of machoism. The power of *yakuwarigo* to evoke such images stems from shared stereotypes allocated to characters who belong to a social group. Kinsui (2003) has proposed that stereotypical images or attributes of Osakans (people who live in or from Osaka), such as a miser, *owaraizuki* (people who loves comedy as well as making jokes), food connoisseurs or Japanese mafia (*yakuza*), have been created by historical transformations and serious interaction of the media. This formation process of the images of characters are the same as that of stereotypes explored

in this chapter. Not only has *yakuwarigo* been formed and reinforced by the social transmission and repeated exposure of the media, but also stereotypes of characters. That is, native Japanese speaking individuals express their identities by applying stereotypes of characters shared among Japanese community members by introducing *yakuwarigo* into their interactions. It can thus be said that *yakuwarigo* works as a mediation tool between one's identities and character stereotypes.

2.10. *Yakuwarigo* as "Play"

High degrees of *yakuwarigo*, which are strongly associated with a particular character type and frequently appear in manga and anime, are also seen in real-life contexts for "play" (Sadanobu, 2011; Otsu, 2007; Yamaguchi, 2011). Jokes are a common example of "play" for Japanese people, who use *yakuwarigo* to introduce a temporary identity that is far from one's "core" identities and which is not part of their repertory of identities in everyday life. For instance, some Japanese who are unable to speak Osaka dialect might say "*Nan de ya nen* (No way)", which is typical *yakuwarigo* of "Osakan", as a comeback to another person's joke. This identity shift often works as a form of "play" by applying "*owaraizuki*" stereotypes of Osakans.

Sadanobu (2011) and Yamaguchi (2011) also point out that many *yakuwarigo* of various types are used as mediation tools in internet conversations. A possible reason for this is anonymous conditions in which such conversations take place, which contributes to covering one's identity shift. Additionally, these conditions enable people to engage in conversation with others without serious consideration of the context and the conversation partner. As a result of this, people are freely able to use high degrees of

yakuwarigo of various types.

To conclude, *yakuwarigo* in the real world functions to empower speakers to evoke particular character stereotypes in order to express their identities, including temporary identities. From a different viewpoint, individuals may shift the identities they project depending on the way they wish to be seen by others.

2.11. Requirement of *Yakuwarigo* Knowledge Among Learners of Japanese

As discussed earlier, *yakuwarigo* is a form of linguistic stereotyping shared among members of a group. Negotiation of meaning among members of Japanese community tend to be conducted by accessing such stereotypes knowledge. The reasons for importance of knowledge of *yakuwarigo* for Japanese learners are explained below from three different perspectives: (1) working as a translator, (2) consumption of Japanese pop-culture, and (3) pursing a relationship with the Japanese community.

Firstly, *yakuwarigo* is fundamental to learners of Japanese who intend to work as translators (Jung, 2011; Kinsui, 2011). Translators need to be able to make appropriate choices when translating Japanese literature into another language and vice versa; inappropriate choices of *yakuwarigo* (or misrepresenting the symbolic communication embodied in *yakuwarigo* when translating from Japanese) have the potential to disrupt the original story. Objective evidence for the importance of *yakuwarigo* in the field of translation comes from a number of *yakuwarigo* studies that have been conducted from a contrastive linguistic viewpoint (e.g., Fukushima, 2012; Gaubats, 2007; Hosokawa, 2011; Jung, 2007; Kaneda, 2011; Yamaguchi, 2007). Furthermore, Jung (2011) has

implemented a training program focusing on *yakuwarigo* for university students studying translation, based on the belief that rich and appropriate knowledge of *yakuwarigo* increases the quality of translation. Therefore, it can be concluded that *yakuwarigo* is one of the essential concepts for learners of Japanese who wish to work in the translation industry.

Secondly, *yakuwarigo* is an important body of knowledge for learners of Japanese who are interested in Japanese culture, especially that of pop-culture, which has developed its own following around the world. One of the crucial functions of *yakuwarigo* which has been explored in this chapter is reduction of a reader's or viewer's cognitive burden that helps them to focus more on the story (Yamaguchi, 2007). In other words, the use of *yakuwarigo* makes the provision of much descriptive information redundant, as the audience can "identify" character types through the language that they use. Consumers of popular culture products who do not have knowledge of *yakuwarigo* may struggle to understand the stories since they would not be able to access certain information related to characters from *yakuwarigo*. In short, the efficient consumption of Japanese popular culture products requires *yakuwarigo* knowledge.

Unlike the first two reasons, the third reason is applicable to all learners of Japanese, even those who are neither interested in being a translator nor engaging with Japanese pop-culture. Knowledge of *yakuwarigo* is essential for communication with others in Japanese, as proficient Japanese speakers are able to use *yakuwarigo* in order to express their identity during a conversation. Hence, knowledge of *yakuwarigo* is necessary for Japanese learners not only for efficient expression of their identities in particular

communicative contexts, but also for understanding interlocutors' identities. Y*akuwarigo* is also needed to understand "play" between proficient Japanese speakers through language because they often joke through *yakuwarigo* (Sadanobu, 2011; Otsu, 2007; Yamaguchi, 2011). Additionally, habitual usage of *yakuwarigo* in interactions on the internet has been noted (Sadanobu, 2011; Yamaguchi, 2011). The internet has revolutionised human communication, and has become one of the most common places in which conversations take place and an essential part of life for many people. In considering the situation, *yakuwarigo* knowledge is necessary for learners of Japanese. Nevertheless, the most important feature of *yakuwarigo* is its shared nature. *Yakuwarigo* is a form of linguistic stereotyping, and therefore, many Japanese community members go about their daily lives accessing and using such stereotypical knowledge to understand their environment. It can, therefore, be predicted that those who do not have *yakuwarigo* knowledge might be confronted with some difficulties.

In the view of the above considerations, learners of Japanese need to learn both low and high degree *yakuwarigo*, since low-degree *yakuwarigo* is frequently used in everyday conversation among members of Japanese community, whereas high-degree *yakuwarigo* has a key role in many Japanese cultural products. The greater the degree of involvement that learners of Japanese have with the Japanese community, the greater the variety of *yakuwarigo* needed.

2.12. *Yakuwarigo* in the Classroom

Even though *yakuwarigo* is an essential concept for learners of Japanese, it has failed to attract serious attention from many Japanese language education experts and teachers,

and additionally, *yakuwarigo* has not generally been considered as a critical part of teaching Japanese among language schools. One possible reason for this is (as discussed earlier) that *yakuwarigo* is often seen as inauthentic or incorrect language. Kinsui (2011) points that the Japanese education field often regards *yakuwarigo* as fictional language use, while Kumano (2011) notes that some Japanese teachers believe that teaching *yakuwarigo* would have a negative impact on their learners' Japanese learning. However, if the degree of language authenticity is judged from perspective of frequent language use among native Japanese speakers in reality (Miyo & Chung, 2006), it is clear that learners of Japanese are often able to learn limited authentic language in their formal classes, and native Japanese speakers use a greater diversity of language forms and expressions than learners are taught.

From a different viewpoint, the role of Japanese class is to make Japanese learners perform as "Japanese learners" (Thomson, 2010). She observes that learners of Japanese are cast as language learners by being taught "classroom Japanese" which differs from modern Japanese language use and perspectives. In other words, this "classroom Japanese" can be considered as a form of *yakuwarigo*, as it is associated with a particular character, that is "Japanese learners". If so, it can be said that Japanese class are taught *yakuwarigo* of "Japanese learners" to act as "Japanese learners".

Some researchers and Japanese teachers have claimed the importance of introducing diverse Japanese language to help learners use Japanese appropriately depending on the contexts in which they find themselves (e.g., Kinsui, 2011; Onzuka, 2011; Shukuri et al., 2015). Learning Japanese language designed for performance as Japanese learners may

work as a foundation for their future language study; nonetheless, it rarely makes any contribution to learners' ability to express identities other than those of Japanese learners. Onzuka (2011) has emphasised that a critical role of Japanese teachers is to teach language in consideration of their learners' lives. In a similar vein, Ushioda (2011) argues that teachers should treat their learners as "people" rather than simply as "language learners". *Yakuwarigo* has a great capacity to become part of an approach that would help teachers to fulfil these roles, as teaching *yakuwarigo* can be understood as teaching a more diverse range of Japanese language forms and registers.

2.13. Knowledge of *Yakuwarigo* Among Learners of Japanese

Kinsui (2003) hypothesises that massive consumption in early childhood of popular culture products in which *yakuwarigo* is ubiquitous help them to build *yakuwarigo* knowledge. If so, the degree of *yakuwarigo* knowledge among Japanese learners who have not experienced such massive consumption in their early childhood nor learned *yakuwarigo* in their Japanese class is open to question. The research field of *yakuwarigo* is in fact quite young, and most of the existing research has been conducted from a "pure" rather than "applied" linguistics standpoint. Nevertheless, two studies that measure Japanese learners' *yakuwarigo* knowledge have been conducted by Jung (2007) and Shukuri et al. (2015). In these studies, high proficiency Korean learners of Japanese (Jung) and various proficiency levels of Russian learners of Japanese (Shukuri et al.) completed matching tests involving examples of *yakuwarigo* and corresponding character images. The data gathered was then analysed quantitatively. From these studies, four main findings emerged. Firstly, even if Japanese learners had the same characters' images as native Japanese, participants did not always associate characters with their *yakuwarigo*

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correctly (Jung, 2007; Shukuri et al, 2015). Secondly, Japanese proficiency level did not work as a definite criterion for possession of correct *yakuwarigo* knowledge among learners (Jung, 2007; Shukuri et al, 2015). Thirdly, residence in Japan, frequent use of Japanese and amount of consumption of Japanese manga and anime had no correlation with the results of the matching tests (Shukuri et al, 2015). Fourthly, significant gaps were found between *yakuwarigo* knowledge among Japanese native speakers and that of Japanese learners (Jung, 2007; Shukuri et al, 2015).

2.14.   Gaps in the Current Research Literature

Although previous research findings conducted by Jung (2007) and Shukuri et al. (2015) are valuable in drawing attention to the difficulty of Japanese learners' acquisition of *yakuwarigo*, these studies investigated only Japanese learners' possession of *yakuwarigo* knowledge rather than exploring the depth of their knowledge. In addition, possible important variables influencing their acquisition of *yakuwarigo* have not been clarified. The present research is conducted in order to begin to address these gaps by examining the depth of *yakuwarigo* knowledge and its acquisition among JSL learners.

In order to investigate the two research questions (see Section 1.3), an ecological approach is used in this study as a theoretical framework.

2.15.   Ecological Approach

In the field of language learning, like most scientific fields, the reductionist approach has traditionally been the dominant research paradigm. However, in more recent times some

researchers have adopted different approaches that avoid extracting one particular variable from an event (Casanave, 2012). The transition has been brought on by criticism of reductionist thinking that the whole is the sum of its parts. Second or foreign language learning is a complex process, and attention to all variables related to one's language learning is required to see it as one system. One of the useful research approaches to apply this idea is the ecological perspective.

"Ecology" refers to ecosystems created by interactions between organisms and the environment (van Lier, 2004). The important feature of an ecosystem is coexistence of various sort of species in a particular environment (do Couto, 2014). All species, materials and other factors that contribute to creating an ecosystem are not connected in a linear manner, but are intricately intertwined. In short, the existence of one species is dependent on many different factors that coexist in the environment, while each species is also seen as the part of environment of others. Clarification of the intricate interactions that are able to be observed in the environment requires the researcher to focus on the context in which the species finds itself. In fact, "context" is the central concept for the ecological field (van Lier, 2002).

The focus on context is highly relevant to language learning endeavours, as language is not separable from the context in which it is actually used. Indeed, a variety of factors, such as human, material, cultural, communal and individual, relevant to language learning coexist in the context in which the learning takes place. These factors are not only connected, but interact and create the learning system which facilitates one's language learning (Palfreyman, 2014). That is, in order to accurately understand this learning, all

factors that constitute the language environment "system" should not be treated as isolation but as one set. For this reason, an ecological perspective brings about great benefits for research in the language educational field.

In order to understand the interactions between environmental factors and species (analogous to learners in the language education) that are important features of the ecological approach, the concept of affordances is useful.

2.16. Affordances

Gibson (1986), who coined the term "affordance", proposed that "the affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or for ill" (p. 127). Based on Gibson's notion, Chemero (2003) adds the ability of organisms as key aspect of affordances, describing affordances as "relations between the abilities of organisms and features of the environment" (p.189). For example, insects eat a leaf because they are afforded the opportunity to do so by the leaf, or people build a house on the ground, because the ground affords them the opportunity to do so. That is, if there is a no affordance, insects do not eat leaves, and people do not build houses on the ground. However, affordances have an impact not only on animals' behaviour but also on the environment itself, since the behaviour given opportunities by affordances possibly alters the environment (Gibson, 1986). Therefore, the term affordance indicates the relations between the environment and organism mediated by a possibility of action provided by the environment (van Lier, 2004). In addition to this notion of affordance, abilities of organisms also need to be taken into account, as Chemero (2003) notes. Even if the environment provides some possibilities of actions, organisms will not take such

actions if they are unable to do so.

van Lier (2004) has suggested a similar definition of affordance, but more particularly related to the language learning. According to him, affordances mediate in the relationship between the abilities of learners and potential resources located in the environment. Affordances thus guide learners to take some actions which are feasible for them and influence the learners' perception of the resources. In general, individual learners possess different abilities or interests, which means that different learners differently engage with the environment through affordances. Thus, different outcomes may occur even when people take the same actions and live in a similar environment.

Affordances related to language learning in one's life environment often have a massive impact on their language learning outcomes. Therefore, clarification of one's language learning affordances is an effective means of investigating language learning mechanisms.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in the present research, which is a qualitative study of three Japanese language learners involving a *yakuwarigo* language-character matching task, followed by a group discussion, and an in-depth individual interview with each participant. The chapter begins with the theoretical consideration of the methods and framework employed in the research, followed by a description of recruitment procedures and profiles of the participants. The data collection process is then explained with respect to each element of the study. Finally, a description of how the data was analysed is provided.

3.1. The Type of Research

This study is a qualitative research project undertaken to investigate the depth of knowledge and the acquisition process of *yakuwarigo* knowledge among JSL learners. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research is not concerned with numerical data. Rather, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning of a particular phenomenon as it occurs in a particular context and involves particular individuals. The idea comes from the belief that the world is comprised of different individuals. This kind of perspective of the world correspond fairly to that of constructivism (Croker, 2009). Constructivism rejects the existence of universal reality, truth or meanings. In this paradigm, they are not primordial and discoverable but created as a result of interaction between people and their world (Merriam, 2002; Richards, 2003). Exploration of the meanings created through these interactions are possible through observation of individuals' experience in a particular context at a particular time. It can thus be said that

qualitative research is person-centred, and persons are not separable from contexts (Rossman & Rallis,2003). This nature of qualitative research assists researchers to understand complex phenomena or explore unknown fields (Dörnyei, 2007).

The justification for conducting the present study as qualitative research can be considered from two aspects. Firstly, this research plays a role in the exploration of an unknown field. In terms of *yakuwarigo* knowledge among learners of Japanese, although the existence of huge gaps between native Japanese and Japanese learners have been identified by previous research, the depth of knowledge and the formative processes involved in acquiring this knowledge, which are what the present study aims to explore, are still unknown. Thus, this study is strongly exploratory in nature. Secondly, this exploration should be conducted in the complex context that is the living environment of people. Knowledge of *yakuwarigo* among Japanese learners must be acquired through their experiences in daily life. Therefore, their own interpretations of what they do in the world and the contextual factors that come into play are certainly not negligible in an investigation of their *yakuwarigo* knowledge and how they acquire it.

A second justification for the adoption of a qualitative approach comes from the specific analytical framework that the study draws upon: the ecological perspective. As noted in the previous chapter, an ecological perspective allows the researcher to understand or interpret learning that emerges from interactions between learners and their environment. It goes without saying that in order to introduce the ecological perspective into the research, learners must be positioned within the context where events occur.

3.2. Participant Recruitment

The target participants of this research were learners of Japanese who were studying in Japanese language schools in Japan. Additionally, to fulfil purposes of the study, Japanese learners who had some degree of *yakuwarigo* knowledge were required. I therefore attempted to recruit individuals who had an interest in manga or anime, based on the hypothesis of acquisition processes of *yakuwarigo* among native Japanese speakers proposed by Kinsui (2003), which posits that popular culture products, such as manga and anime, significantly contribute to acquisition of their *yakuwarigo* knowledge.

As a first step in the participant recruitment, the researcher obtained permission from a Japanese language school in Japan to recruit their students as research participants. After ethics approval was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee at Macquarie University (see Appendix 1), a recruitment advertisement was posted in the school. The advertisement was designed to recruit appropriate participants for the research by indicating the participation conditions (the necessity of a certain level of Japanese and who prefer manga or anime). Importantly, participating in the research was voluntary, and in order to guarantee this, potential participants who were interested in the project were asked to contact the researcher directly via the email address provided in the recruitment advertisement without notifying the school staff. The researcher explained the study to interested participants, who also signed an information-consent form prepared in Japanese (see Appendix 2 and 3).

3.3. Participants

Three learners of Japanese volunteered to participate in the present study. All the

participants were studying at the same Japanese school and in the same class, but had different nationalities and first languages. Participants' demographic details are presented in Table 3.1.

Name (Pseudonym)	Age	Gender	Nationality	Native Language	Time spent learning Japanese in their country	Time spent learning Japanese in Japan	The grade of JLPT (Japanese Language Proficiency Test)
Kevin	19	Male	Indonesian	Indonesian	8 months	12 months	[1] N3
Ice	28	Male	Thai	Thai	3 months	15 months	N3
Rahul	23	Male	Indian	English	24 months	2 months	N2

Table 3.1. Demographic information of the participants
*1 There are 5 levels from N5 to N1, and N1 is the highest level.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

Data for the research was collected through two qualitative methods: 1. A group discussion which included an initial "stimulus task", and 2. Individual interviews. Both the group discussion and the individual interviews were audio-recorded for later analysis. The group discussion was also video-recorded in order to facilitate identification of the speakers during the discussion. Both group discussion and individual interviews were conducted at the Japanese school where the participants were studying. The participants were able to provide rich data in their approaches to the *yakuwarigo* task, group discussion and individual interview due to their strong interest in the study. Both the group discussion and individual interviews were carried out in Japanese.

3.4.1. Group Discussion

If well designed, data gathering sessions that involve a group can allow researchers to obtain rich and high-quality data, as participants are able to consider issues with others reflecting their ideas and opinions (Dörnyei, 2007). In this sense, collection of data from a group is closer to the natural settings than that of the survey or interview, as developing one's ideas through interaction with others is similar to the communication in which people engage in everyday life (Flick, 2009). In the present research, this meant that participants were able to stimulate each other to activate knowledge of *yakuwarigo* acquired through their respective experiences.

The group discussion was facilitated by the researcher, and began with an activity where participants had 10 minutes to describe briefly in writing the attributes that they would associate with particular *yakuwarigo* (e.g., the speaker of *yakuwarigo* might be poor, rich, childish, strong etc…), and complete a short *yakuwarigo*-character matching exercise. The task sheet (see Appendix 4) was designed to ask participants to describe attributes within *yakuwarigo* either by (1) selecting from attribution samples prepared by the researcher as prompts, or (2) providing them directly if they felt that there were any other attributes which were not in the samples list.

The task sheet was composed of five character images (boy, girl, elderly male, samurai, well-off girl) and eight *yakuwarigo* samples (five characters + butler, rural dweller, scrapper). These character images were chosen based on frequent appearance of Japanese manga and anime to select characters with a high degree of

common recognition. Kumano (2011) notes that most of these characters are common characters found in popular manga and anime around the world.

A normative sentence for the eight *yakuwarigo* samples used in the initial task was "*Watashi wa koko ni sundeimasu*" (I live here), and all *yakuwarigo* samples were created based on this normative sentence by the researcher, with reference to Kinsui (2014), Kumano (2011) and a website of Japanese learning resources called *Anime·Manga no Nihongo* (Japanese in Anime & Manga) offered by The Japan Foundation (2010).

The group session followed immediately after participants completed their task sheets, and lasted 90 minutes. It began with a discussion of the kinds of attributes or images the participants associated with each of the eight *yakuwarigo* samples (described above) and the experiences that had helped them to form these associations. Participants were then asked to present their responses to the matching task, and this was followed by a discussion of any changes in character attributes or images that they had encountered after providing five characters' visual images. The third topic focused more on *yakuwarigo* use in the real world. Participants were asked about their own observations of *yakuwarigo* use by Japanese community members as well as the attributes or images that they associated with the speakers. Additionally, *yakuwarigo* use of the participants in everyday conversations was discussed. The final topic concerned the issue of *yakuwarigo* in the classroom, and the participants' views on whether or not learning *yakuwarigo* in the classroom would be beneficial.

3.4.2. Individual Interviews

The group discussion was followed by an individual semi-structured interview with each participant. This order was deliberate and was intended to enhance the validity of data gathered for the present study, since the order could play a role in brainstorming for the topic and preparing for the individual interviews. The interview method provides opportunities for researchers to access participants' experiences, beliefs and perspectives deeply (Richards, 2009), which are indeed essential for the present study. In particular, semi-structured interview allows researchers to follow the "interview guide" created in advance, while also allowing them the flexibility to follow up on participants' responses. The present research gathered information on the participants' environment asking about their everyday life and language learning to address the research questions. Semi-structured interviews, therefore, reduced the possibility of missing important information for the present study by not constraining the participants' responses.

The individual interview in the present study was approximately 50 minutes in duration, focusing on in-class and out-of-class resources and activities. The interview questions were divided into three sections. The first section collected demographic information, such as age, length of stay in Japan, length of studying Japanese and proficiency level of Japanese. The second section focused on their daily life in Japan and their home country, such as hobbies, ways of spending time, and everyday life events. The third section investigated the participants' ways of learning Japanese. It began with general questions about their learning approaches and practices, including their reasons for studying Japanese and ways of Japanese learning at the school and beyond the classroom, followed by more specific questions regarding their thoughts on strategies for learning *yakuwarigo*.

Participants were also asked about differences that they perceived between learning Japanese in their own countries and in Japan. These questions were designed to investigate the affordances between participants and their environment from three different levels: 1. Living practice 2. General learning practice and 3. Learning practice related to *yakuwarigo*. The multiple perspectives on these relevant affordances helped clarify which affordances contributed to their Japanese learning and to the acquisition of *yakuwarigo*.

In addition to the interview questions above, as a second source of data, participants were asked to bring any examples of media or resources that they had used for studying Japanese. This second source allowed the researcher to understand their current activities relating to the acquisition of *yakuwarigo* from another viewpoint, as this data was able to be collected without the researcher's subjective judgements. Media and other resources brought by participants were a reflection of their beliefs on what they find useful for Japanese learning. This additional source of data served as a form of triangulation; therefore, it also enhances the validity of the data.

3.5. Data Analysis

Recorded data collected through the group discussion and individual interviews were transcribed and coded in the analysis stage. Data collection methods of this research yielded subjective data, and this kind of data needs some kind of framework for interpretation (Pavlenko, 2007), which adds a degree of objectivity to the analysis. Given that this study explores participants' *yakuwarigo* knowledge acquisition processes, ecological perspectives were used as a theoretical framework.

Firstly, segmented group discussion data related to the depth of *yakuwarigo* knowledge among the participants were grouped together with respect to each sample of *yakuwarigo*. Secondly, the initial coding (Dörnyei, 2007) was conducted using all transcribed data (group discussion and three individual interviews) by reading them repeatedly. Information which was interesting or directly related to the research aim was extracted, and coded with informative labels (e.g. '*yakuwarigo* in manga and anime'; *yakuwarigo* in real life'; *yakuwarigo* used by the participants'). In terms of individual interview data, information was also divided into three different levels of affordances: everyday life, language learning and *yakuwarigo* acquisition. The process of bunching data and initial cording were implemented with NVivo 11 which is a qualitative data analysis software. Thirdly, in order to analyse individual interview data in more depth, profiles in which dialogic interview data was transformed into narrative form using the interviewees' own words and minimal words of the researcher to make transitions between passages (Seidman, 1998) were crafted from that the interview data of each participant. According to Seidman (1998), crafting profiles are able to help researchers to understand participants within the context and clarify the intention of their comment, both of which are important part of qualitative research. Lastly, the four initial coded data sets and the three profiles were carefully compared to identify some commonalities, and these commonalities were then treated not as isolated entities but as one set. The data analysis described above was conducted by the author, who is a native Japanese speaker and has been working for more than five years as a Japanese language teacher both in Japan and Australia. The author also enjoys reading manga and watching anime and has been consuming these products for approximately 25 years.

Chapter 4:   Findings

This chapter presents the findings identified from the data analysis. Findings of the group discussion are provided first. Following this, findings of individual interviews are presented for each participant case respectively. Based on these findings, communality of findings is summarised at the end of the chapter. In some instances, participants' contributions to the group discussion complemented information provided in their later individual interview, and in such cases this information is included as part of the individual case descriptions.

4.1.   Group Discussion

As a result of tasks which involved describing (in writing) characters' images or attributes derived from *yakuwarigo* and completing the *yakuwarigo*-character matching task, followed by the group discussion, it was found that participants were able to obtain some characters' images from samples of *yakuwarigo* and match them with characters with considerable accuracy. This judgement here was (naturally) dependent on the *yakuwarigo* knowledge of the researcher as a native speaker of Japanese and the internet resources, as there exists no definitive and authoritative published reference work on *yakuwarigo* and associated character images. Due to the space restrictions, only the most salient findings are presented here. A chart which summarises more completely the data generated by the tasks and the ensuing group discussion can be found in Appendix 5.

4.1.1.   Images Derived from *Yakuwarigo*

Many images or attributes that participants obtained from *yakuwarigo* samples appear to

have commonalities with stereotypical images which are likely to be shared among native Japanese speakers. Nevertheless, some images which would appear to be different from those that native Japanese speakers would likely identify were also apparent. The salient differences between the participants and native Japanese speakers can be observed especially in relation to the *yakuwarigo* associated with the rural dweller, well-off girl and butler.

In terms of language sample intended to represent a rural dweller, two out of three participants reported that it evoked from them images which particularly related to a child. These kinds of images are in fact not completely inaccurate since "*ora*" (the first-person pronoun) can express purity and innocence, and could be associated with the childish image (Kinsui, 2014). Additionally, child characters who use "*ora*" are able to be observed in some manga and anime. Nevertheless, the sample *yakuwarigo, "ora wa koko ni sunderuda",* is associated with a rural dweller rather than a child character due to its combination of the first-person pronoun "*ora*" and final part of the sentence "*deru-da*". In this instance, consistent images reported by two of the participants related to a child may differ from stereotypical images shared among native Japanese.

Images of seriousness, elegance, kindness, smart and metropolitan were derived from *yakuwarigo* of well-off girl according to participants. Japanese may also obtain similar images since well-off girl characters have been depicted with these images in some productions. Despite this, some participants mentioned two more images associated with this *yakuwarigo* sample which seemed less accurate: (1) maid and (2) a man. These images could be accurate only if the word "*watakushi*" (the first-person pronoun) is

focused on, as this word is used by both males and females (Kinsui, 2014). However, "*noyo*" (double sentence-final particles) is generally associated with women's language, and moreover, the final part of sentence "*masu-noyo*" belongs to a woman of high rank. Thus, the end of the sentence in this *yakuwarigo* sample, "*watakushi wa koko ni sundemasunoyo*", would not normally be associated with either of the image of a man or a maid.

Most images mentioned by participants in response to the stereotypical butler's *yakuwarigo* are similar to images which Japanese people share. However, one participant obtained the image of arrogance from the sample butler's *yakuwarigo*, "*watakushime wa koko ni sundeirunodegozaimasu*", since he perceived the language as overpolite. While he correctly identified the excessive politeness derived from the sample *yakuwarigo,* the difference between the image he formed and the and stereotypical images which many native Japanese speakers have is that this excessive politeness is not regarded as an expression of arrogance but rather as an expression of deference for a master.

According to participants, obtaining speakers' images from these three *yakuwarigo* (rural dweller, well-off girl and butler) was very difficult. The reason for this is that the line of well-off girl also reminded them of possible characters other than a well-off girl who may speak in a similar way. In terms of rural dweller and butler, some participants had never encountered the character who speaks those kind of *yakuwarigo* in anime and manga.

4.1.2.   Ways in which Participants Derived Character Images from *Yakuwarigo*

In completing the tasks, participants demonstrated that they were able to derive many

character images from *yakuwarigo*. They explained that they did this by recalling characters that they had seen in anime or manga who had used the similar Japanese to that which was used in the *yakuwarigo* samples on the task sheet. According to participants, obtaining the images or attributes of a character from *yakuwarigo* which the participants have encountered a number of times in manga or anime was easier than *yakuwarigo* which they had seldom or never met in the products. However, even if *yakuwarigo* is one which the participants have frequently seen in the products, remembering whose *yakuwarigo* it is and what types of characters remained challenging for them.

All participants indicated that they focused primarily on the first-person pronoun at the beginning of the sentence to identify the character image, with one participant also regarding the final element of the sentence as important. The perceived importance of the first-person pronoun can be observed in the case of the participant who thought *yakuwarigo* of well-off girl could be a male character's one. This might have happened because the participant focused only on the first-person pronoun subject of the sentence "*watakushi*", which can be use by males and females. If the participant had also focused on the final part of the sentence "*noyo*" that is typical Japanese used by women, he might have avoided associating this *yakuwarigo* with a male character.

4.1.3. Source of *Yakuwarigo*

Anime and manga were the predominant answers for participants when asked where their knowledge in terms of characters' images and attributes evoked by the *yakuwarigo* samples came from (i.e., their *yakuwarigo* knowledge). As further evidence of this, all

participants claimed that they experienced significant difficulties in imagining character images or attributes from a particular *yakuwarigo* which they had rarely seen in these products. It can be said that – at least for these participants – anime and manga contribute substantially to their formation of *yakuwarigo* knowledge. Indeed, particular anime and manga titles and those of characters can be seen in their discussion of the kinds of images evoked by the sample *yakuwarigo* (e.g., Goku from Dragon Balls, Rurouni Kenshin, Chibi Maruko-chan, Assassination Classroom, Sengoku Basara and Your Name).

Participants also noted that they had encountered some *yakuwarigo* (mostly in the form of first person pronouns) used by Japanese people in various contexts in everyday life.

"*boku*" (the first-person pronoun of the boy in the task)

"Boku" is the word that I have most frequently heard. Males in their twenties use this word. (Rahul)

"Boku" is used by a meek and shy person. (Ice)

"*ore*" (the first-person pronoun of the scrapper in the task)

"Ore" is used by males who are talking over beer with friends. (Ice)

"*ore*" and "*ze*" (sentence-final particle of scrapper in the task)

This way of speaking is similar to those of young people who get together at parking area of my workplace (Kevin)

"*atashi*" (the first-person pronoun of girl in the task)

Middle aged women use "atashi". (Rahul)

"Atashi" is used by old ladies. (Ice)

"*watakushi*" (the first-person pronoun of well-off girl in the task)

Teachers often use "watakushi" over the phone. (Kevin)

"ora" (the first-person pronoun of rural dweller in the task)

A child whose parents might be rich used "ora" when the child had a family quarrel with a parent in my workplace. (Kevin)

4.1.4. Results of the Matching Task

Participants were given a task in which they were asked to match eight sample *yakuwarigo* with five visual images (boy, elderly male, girl, well-off girl and samurai) (i.e., there were no visual images associated *yakuwarigo* of scrapper, butler and rural dweller). With just one exception, all participants were able to complete the task correctly. The one mistake occurred because the participant thought the woman who uses "*atashi*" (the first-person pronoun of girl) was more feminine than those who use "*watakushi*" (the first-person pronoun of well-off girl). The participant then matched the visual image of a well-off girl with *yakuwarigo* of a girl, as visual image of the well-off girl seemed more feminine than that of the girl for him. Although one participant made a small mistake which may be caused by focusing on the degree of "femininity" rather than "social class", this mistake did not result from a significant lack of knowledge of *yakuwarigo*. Therefore, it can be said that participants were able to match *yakuwarigo* and visual images of its speakers with considerable accuracy.

Furthermore, even where the stereotypical images or attributes that the participants obtained from *yakuwarigo* sample were not entirely accurate in the initial part of the task sheet, they were able to "self-correct" and match *yakuwarigo* with the correct visual images on the task which involved *yakuwarigo*-picture. For example, the participant who regarded *yakuwarigo* of a well-off girl as that of male character before being provided

with visual images of the character was able to associate *yakuwarigo* of the well-off girl with its visual image.

4.1.5. Teaching *Yakuwarigo* in Japanese Schools

None of the participants reported having learned *yakuwarigo* in the classroom context. However, by the end of the discussion of whether or not *yakuwarigo* ought to be part of the curriculum, they all expressed the view that it was an aspect of Japanese that should be taught as part of language learning programs. Three main reasons for this were evident from their responses.

1. Everyday Japanese

Participants regard *yakuwarigo* as part of everyday Japanese, rather than a form of the language that appears only in works of fiction.

They (Japanese schools) should teach such Japanese (yakuwarigo) because it is used in everyday life. It is problem if learners do not know such Japanese even though they know the Japanese language well. (Ice)

Japanese schools need to teach their students such Japanese (yakuwarigo) not so that they can use these forms, but at least so that they can understand them. (Rahul)

2. The Position of Japanese Learners in a Japanese Society

One participant (Kevin) expressed the view that the identity ascribed to learners of Japanese often positions them at a low level of the social hierarchy in Japanese society.

Japanese schools only taught formal Japanese such as "watashi", "watashi" even though I've been learning Japanese for 2 or 3 years. So, I only use "watashi" in everyday life, and I feel underestimated. I want to be thought of as the person who can use such kind of Japanese (yakuwarigo). (Kevin)

3. A Cultural Issue

In fact, at the beginning the discussion regarding the issue of *yakuwarigo* in Japanese schools, there was an initial opinion that Japanese schools have no need to teach *yakuwarigo* to their learners.

We don't need to learn such language (yakuwarigo) in Japanese schools because we can naturally learn (yakuwarigo) through just watching anime (Rahul)

However, the ensuing discussion clarified one problem with this idea of learning by reading manga and watching anime. Even though it has been gradually changing, in some countries anime or manga are considered as products for children, and there is often a bias against the mature person who consumes these products. Therefore, participants questioned the learnability of *yakuwarigo* for those who belong to communities that having this kind of attitude toward manga or anime.

(In my country) when someone (adults) sees anime, other people think like "what's that, are you child"?... Anime and cartoon are always for children in my country. (Kevin)

In Thailand, it (manga and anime) is seen as products for children (Ice)

4.2. Individual Cases

Although the three participants are all studying Japanese intensively at the same language school and thus live in the same city, different affordances emerge between different resources. Hence, key elements of their lifestyle and ways of learning Japanese and *yakuwarigo* are provided here as form of case study for each individual participant.

4.2.1. The Case of Kevin
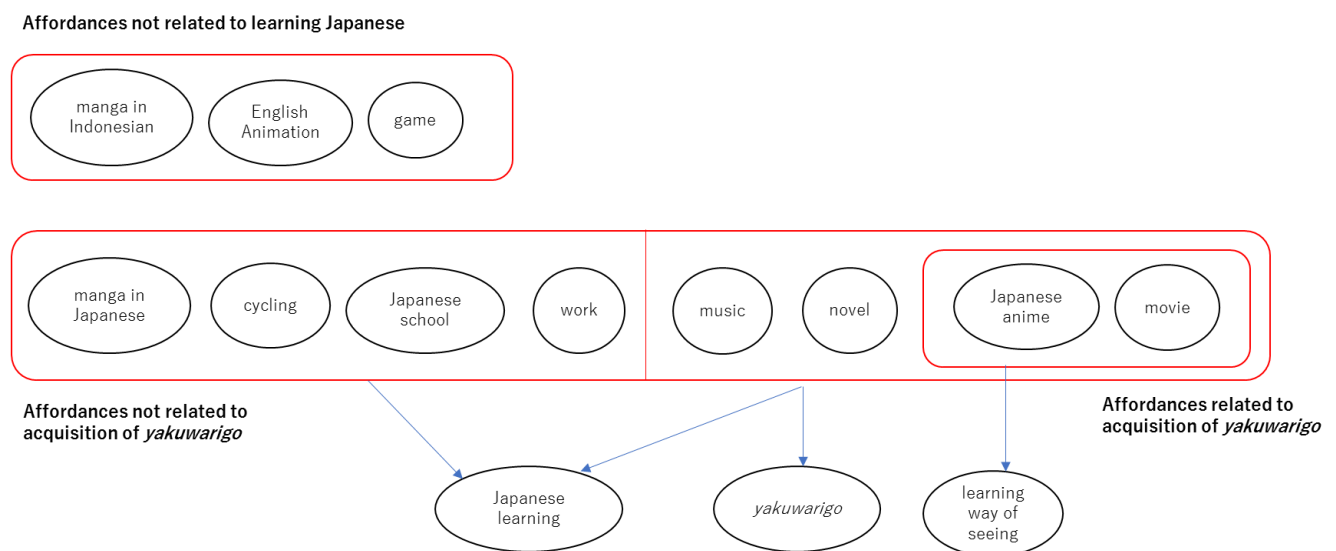
Figure 4.1. Affordances for everyday life and Japanese and *yakuwarigo* learning for Kevin

4.2.1.1. Affordances in Everyday Life

Kevin often spends extensive time in a Japanese language school and work (in the retail sector) and the rest of the time for pleasure. Other than the language school and work, anime is the resource in which he invests most of his time. He generally watches anime with Indonesian subtitles (where these are provided) or without subtitles for newer productions. Other resources from which affordances emerge and form part of his life in Japan are music, novels, manga (in Japanese and translated into Indonesian), cycling,

smartphone games and English animation movies (see Figure 4.1). Most of the music which he listens to while commuting is J-pop. Although he prefers anime to manga, he sometimes reads manga in Japanese or translated into Indonesian. Some of the everyday life activities that he pursues in his spare time, especially anime and music, are similar to those in which he engaged before he came to Japan.

4.2.1.2. Affordances Related to Japanese Learning

Figure 4.1 presents the affordances that emerge from Japanese school, work, cycling, manga (in Japanese), movies, music, novels and anime contribute to his everyday life and are also related to his Japanese learning. By contrast, those resources that are not related to his Japanese learning are the ones which have no capacity to expose him to Japanese (i.e., English animation movie and manga translated in Indonesian) and can be pursued without the need for understanding Japanese (i.e., smartphone games).

Kevin regards the classroom as the only space in which he engages in formal Japanese learning. Nevertheless, he considers that he is able to learn only one particular type of Japanese from Japanese classes and textbooks, and this consideration may explain his negative views on the formal Japanese learning that he has experienced.

Language taught in schools is something serious or formal…

Honestly, I don't want to use textbook. But teachers always say, "please open this page". So, I have no choice (to use it in the class).

Interestingly, Kevin does not generally take actions directed primarily at Japanese learning outside the classroom. Rather, he learns Japanese through actions taken to fulfil

purposes other than Japanese learning. For example, cycling provides him with opportunities to learn *kanji*, as the following account illustrates:

When I got lost while cycling, I read the sign written in kanji which shows where I am. Then, I notice like "oh – this kanji is used".

Kevin has also realised his daily life behaviour of consuming anime, music and novels help him to learn Japanese, but he seems to consume these products more for his enjoyment or fulfilling purposes other than language learning.

I watch anime because it is fun and teaches me something not only Japanese…For example, my thoughts and anime heroes' thoughts are always different. So, my perception has been changing by watching anime

I listen to music not for study purposes, but more for my enjoyment.

Enjoyment actually facilitates his language learning. For Kevin, the most useful resource to learn Japanese is anime, particularly one Japanese animation movie, called "*Byosoku go senchi metoru*" (5 Centimetres per Second). He explains that this is because the Japanese in this movie is much easier than other anime, and he is able to learn *kanji* in the letter-reading scene because the written letter is displayed on the screen. Despite this, as mentioned above, he watches this animation movie not only for study purposes but rather for enjoyment.

The story of this (movie) is very impressive…I have been watching this anime many times on my day off.

In order to accomplish his purpose of consuming these products, such as enjoyment and broadening his mind, he emphasises the need to understand the contents of these products.

I always listen to the same music until I can understand what they say and what they want to say. But, even if I could understand it, I listen to it again and again because I like the song itself.

According to Kevin, the important process underpinning out-of-class learning is listening, understanding and then using.

I learn some Japanese during the work by listening.

First listening, then understanding, and using. This is my way of learning Japanese.

Kevin's account of his learning process indicates that he notices some unknown Japanese words or expressions at the listening stage. This noticing then leads him to take other actions directly related to his Japanese learning (e.g., checking the meaning in books and asking teachers).

While watching anime, if I couldn't understand a meaning of Japanese of main character, I check the meaning by myself using books. However, I sometimes can't find it. In that case, I will then ask teachers, and finally I can figure out.

It is important to note that he has a fundamental belief which may have a potent influence on his Japanese learning, since he maintains positive thoughts about his Japanese learning progress due to the belief provided below.

People must be mature. For example, in the game, it is impossible for the level one person to beat the level five person. But the level one person always grows up and becomes level five…So, I believe that (my Japanese is) always improving.

Although living in a Japanese environment has increased the number of opportunities to use Japanese, his outside the classroom Japanese learning has not significantly changed

so far in terms of resources and strategies.

(The way of learning) has not changed so far. However, in Japan, if I learn new grammar, I have chance to use it immediately.

4.2.1.3. Affordances Related to *Yakuwarigo* Acquisition

The resources from which affordances emerge relating to both Japanese learning in general and acquisition of *yakuwarigo* in particular are anime, music and novels (see Figure 4.1). Kevin has built the knowledge of *yakuwarigo* by being exposed to them through consuming products that contain a large number of *yakuwarigo*.

Most Japanese we talked about in the group discussion (yakuwarigo) is learned through listening. Then, it is in my head. Listening to anime, music and sometimes novels too.

In particular, anime plays a powerful role in his acquisition of *yakuwarigo* knowledge, since the resource was also a trigger of awareness of existence of *yakuwarigo* for him.

I actually have been watching anime before I started to study Japanese. At that time, I couldn't understand Japanese, but I unconsciously learn such Japanese (yakuwarigo). Then, one day, I realised this character uses this kind of language.

The interest in character-specific language forms seems to be an important element in his acquisition of *yakuwarigo*. He is more interested in the kind of Japanese that appears in anime and music, which varies from one person or character to another, rather than the more formulaic language taught in Japanese classes that he has attended.

Unlike language taught in Japanese schools, the Japanese we looked at in the group discussion (yakuwarigo) gives me chance to learn individual differences. I can understand immediately even if it is really difficult.

Finally, he regards *yakuwarigo* as more similar to the language used in real life conversations than the language taught in schools.

Japanese that appears in anime is more similar to everyday Japanese than in the class.

4.2.1.4. *Yakuwarigo* in Real Life

Kevin reports using a limited range of *yakuwarigo*, and there are mainly two reasons. First, his conversation opportunities are quite few because he is an indoor person.

I don't talk to others in Japanese because I usually don't go outside.

Second, the place where he has most chance to speak Japanese is the Japanese school and his workplace (a retail store). However, he generally only speaks Japanese learned in formal classes since he tries to maximize the politeness for teachers and customers, and students in the same class are not able to understand *yakuwarigo*.

My fellow students are smart, but they don't understand Japanese in anime.

In spite of this, he does vary his use of first-person pronouns ("*watashi*", "*boku*" "*watakushi*", "*washi*") depending on the situation.

"*watashi*"
When I talk to teachers, I use "watashi"

"*boku*"
In a text message, I often use "boku". If the conversation is face to face, "boku" is only for familiar persons.

"*watakushi*"
When I answer the phone from customers, I use "watakushi" for hiding the gender.

"washi"

In my workplace, one Japanese person is annoying (asking too much things to do). So, I thought how about using "washi". Then, I said "washi ga yarimasu (I will do)", and the person went away from me. So, I use "washi" since that time.

His used of the first-person pronoun "*washi*" suggests that he understands stereotyping knowledge that would associate this form with an elderly male. One of the stereotypical attributes is dignity. So, he may have idea that the dignity attribute is emerged from an elderly male, and his first-person pronoun "*washi*" is able to express the attribute although he may be unsure how the other person will respond to him.

4.2.2. The Case of Ice
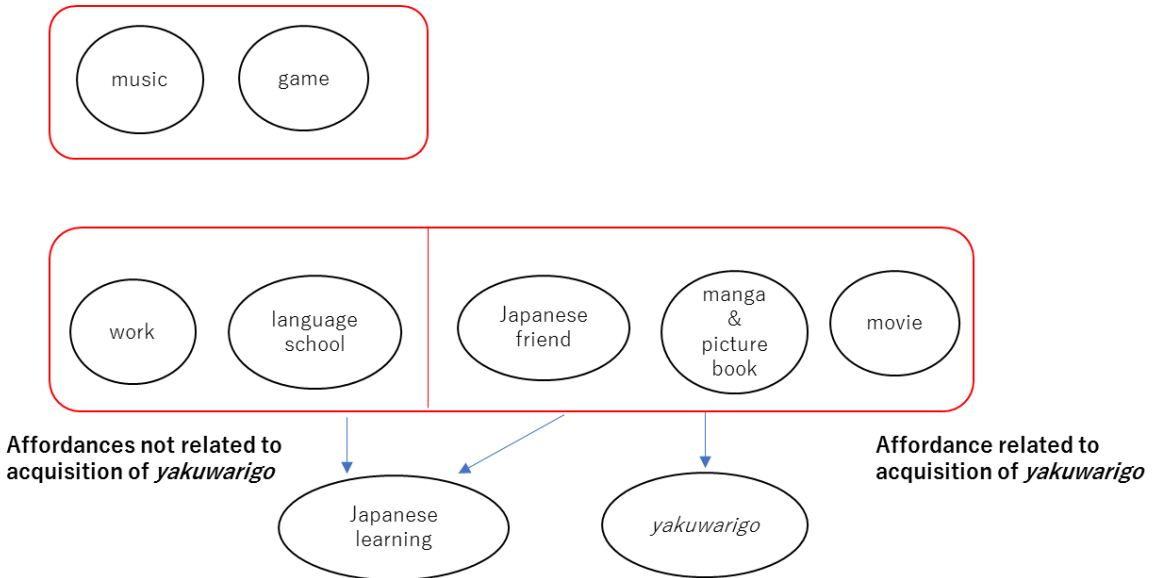
Affordances not related to learning Japanese

Figure 4.2. Affordances for everyday life and Japanese and *yakuwarigo* learning for Ice

4.2.2.1. Affordances in Everyday Life

As can be seen Figure 4.2, resources from which affordances emerge everyday life of Ice are Japanese school, work (food service), games, music, a Japanese friend, manga and picture books and movies. Of these, manga and games are the resources to which he devotes the greatest amounts of time. The game genre that he plays most frequently is Multiplayer Online Battle Arena, which often involves communication with other players. However, he plays this game with Thai friends, and so he only uses Thai while playing it. In terms of music, the music that he listens to the most is English, and some is Japanese.

Ice reports that his everyday life activities in Japan are somewhat different from those of in Thailand. Playing games is the unchanged activity, while activities afforded by Japanese manga and picture books, reading and translation (which he does for his Thai

friends who cannot read manga in Japanese as well as for his enjoyment) have become new hobbies for him since coming to Japan. Although he has in fact read Japanese manga and picture books from his childhood in Thailand, he had only consumed translated Thai versions before living in Japan.

4.2.2.2. Affordances Related to Japanese Learning

Resources form his everyday life from which affordances emerge related to his Japanese learning are Japanese schools, work, the Japanese friend, movies and manga and picture books (see Figure 4.2).

His Japanese learning occurs both inside and outside the classroom, but Ice reports that his formal learning only occurs in the former space. Regarding his in-class learning, he seems satisfied – at least to some extent – with the class that he attends at the language school in Japan.

I'm enjoying studying Japanese (in the school). Actually, the first class was too easy for me. But, for now, although the class is sometimes difficult, it is better than before.

Despite this positive appraisal of his in-class learning, Ice considers the purpose of formal learning to be limited to preparing for examinations or language proficiency tests.

Learning in the language school is just for preparing the JLPT.

He clearly rejects the notion of learning Japanese only for examination purposes, and questions its effectiveness.

I don't like to read books or do something simply for passing the JLPT. That (the JPLT) measures our proficiency or talent (in terms of language). Actually, many people often try to develop their proficiency by reading books. However, proficiency developed in such

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way doesn't help oneself when something occurs.

He elaborates on his views with an example that illustrates how Japanese learned only in a formal setting differs from everyday Japanese.

My Thai friend who just came to Japan in April of this year cannot speak and listen to Japanese even though the friend has studied Japanese for many years in Thailand… So, reality is different from textbooks.

His out-of-class learning, therefore, occurs without using textbooks or for the purpose of examinations. Rather, Ice learns Japanese through linguistic behaviour directed at fulfilling tasks or purposes other than language learning.

I need to use Japanese honorifics at work for serving customers. So, I can learn such Japanese

Above all, he notes that behaviours that he engages in for enjoyment are likely to facilitate his language learning. As evidence of this, he cites manga and picture books as the most useful resources for him to learn Japanese, and his fundamental reason for reading and translating these product is that he enjoys doing so.

Although translation of manga into Thai is becoming my work because my friends are looking forward to it, asking "when?", the reason why I read manga and picture books and translate manga is because it is fun.

I often gave up studying with textbooks because it is boring. However, manga is very interesting, and when I read manga, I don't feel I'm studying now.

Furthermore, Ice regards language input provided by manga, and also by his Japanese friend, as more similar to everyday Japanese, and these resources provide him with opportunities to learn such language.

Talking to my Japanese friend helps me to learn everyday Japanese. But it is not useful for learning Japanese related to the class or examination…excepting for the listening test.

Manga is related to everyday Japanese which I can't learn from textbooks.

Even though he sees the purpose of in-class language learning as limited, his responses suggest that learns Japanese effectively by using two different conditions.

How I study Japanese now is that when I have already encountered some Japanese taught in the class before in the course of conversation with friend or in manga, I feel "oh I know this word". It is (also) possible the other way around.

He reinforces his Japanese by noticing the Japanese elements that he has encountered in a different context. Therefore, it can be said that "noticing" mediates his in-class and out-of-class learning.

4.2.2.3. Affordances Related to *Yakuwarigo* Acquisition

Figure 4.2 shows that resources from which affordances emerge related to both his general Japanese learning and *yakuwarigo* acquisition are his Japanese friend, movies and manga and picture books. In the group discussion, Ice's contributions indicated that most of his *yakuwarigo* knowledge came from manga and some from movies. His Japanese friend contributes to building his *yakuwarigo* knowledge by answering his questions and advising him on appropriate use of *yakuwarigo*.

My Japanese friend said to me "you are my friend, so you should use boku"

Among resources, the most influential resource for his formation of *yakuwarigo* knowledge is manga.

For learning (the kind of) language seen in the group discussion (yakuwarigo), I think

manga. It is manga.

Manga not only affords him the opportunity to read but also translate works into Thai. In order to translate Japanese manga into Thai, he needs to consider the way of managing Japanese *yakuwarigo*. He thus observes and notices how *yakuwarigo* is used in the product. He showed his *yakuwarigo* knowledge with manga that he brought to the individual interview, as the following quotes illustrate:

This main character always says "ore" in front of his friends, but he only uses "boku" in front of others.

In this manga, the dog is the main character, and he talks. This dog calls his owner "totan (father)". This is like the infant language. I would never have understood the meaning of "totan" if I read only textbooks.

When he notices the existence of *yakuwarigo* and fails to figure out its meanings or its speakers, he often adopts another behaviour which helps to build his *yakuwarigo* knowledge:

If I couldn't understand such Japanese (yakuwarigo), I check it by myself or ask my Japanese friend.

According to Ice, *yakuwarigo* and also Japanese language are able to be learned from manga regardless of one's Japanese level.

When I began translating manga, I couldn't understand Japanese, but I translated it. For example, in the game, even if level one brave men is beaten by level five enemy, he can also be level five (if he continues fighting). So, one will be able to understand and study more if one continues to read it.

This game analogy is very similar to the learning belief of Kevin, presented as part of the previous individual case.

4.2.2.4. *Yakuwarigo* in Real Life

Ice engages in conversations with the Japanese friend, a manager and customers at work as well as teachers and classmates at the Japanese school. He reports that he generally speaks Japanese the way that he was taught in Japanese language classes, but does use two different first-persons pronouns, "*watashi*" and "*boku*", depending on the conversation partner.

"*watashi*"
I generally use "watashi" because I use this a lot during a Japanese class.

"***boku***"
For a familiar person such as a friend, I use "boku".

He uses only a few first-person pronouns and most of time uses "*watashi*", which he attributes explicitly to its frequent use in Japanese classes.

4.2.3. The Case of Rahul

Affordances not related to Japanese learning

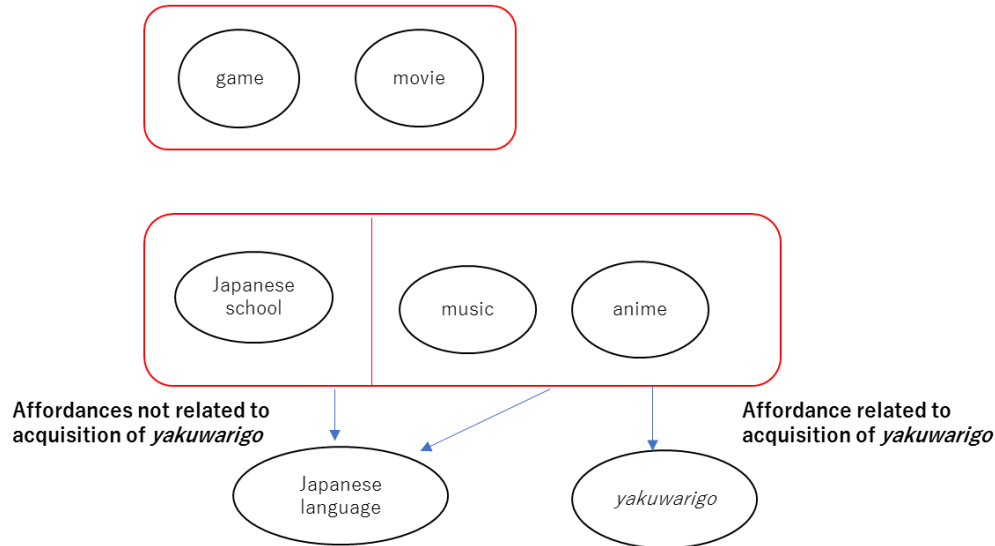
Figure 4.3. Affordances for everyday life and Japanese and *yakuwarigo* learning for Rahul

4.2.3.1. Affordances in Everyday Life

As can be seen Figure 4.3, resources in Rahul's environment from which affordances emerge are the Japanese school, games, movies, music (anime songs) and anime. Above all, he spends extensive time playing games and watching anime. Games are definitely one of the important elements of his life routine. He often plays First-Person Shooter or Multiplayer Online Battle Arena genre games on his computer, and the language both in the game and in-game voice chat is only English. He watches English movies, but not Japanese ones. These everyday life activities have not changed since he relocated from India to Japan.

4.2.3.2. Affordances Related to Japanese Learning

Resources which affordances emerge both for his everyday life activities and Japanese

learning are the Japanese school, anime and music (anime songs) (see Figure 4.3). Like the other two participants, Rahul reports that he does not normally study Japanese at home using textbooks or reference books. The classroom is thus the only place where he believes that his formal language learning occurs. He indicates that he is studying Japanese simply because this is something that he wants to do, and he seems satisfied with the current Japanese class.

I'm studying Japanese because I just want to study Japanese. There are no any other reasons such as for watching anime without subtitle.

The class (in Japan) is really fun for me. At the Japanese school (that I attended) in India, there is no chance to use the Japanese which I learnt. Everybody closes their mouth and just sits there. But here, everybody tries and challenges themselves. It encourages me to speak Japanese.

His out-of-class learning occurs through his behaviours afforded by anime and music. Rahul has in fact enhanced his Japanese using these two resources, and music is considered as the most useful resource for learning Japanese for him. He believes that he could passed the JLPT N2 by learning Japanese through anime and music.

I learnt Japanese by myself watching anime for one year, and I could understand N5 Japanese. I didn't study (formally)…watching anime is really useful for learning from N5 to N3 Japanese.

One can understand N2 vocabulary by listening to (Japanese) music.

Rahul also explained the actual benefits and learning strategies associated with these resources. The benefits of learning language through watching anime is that he is able to learn Japanese words which are difficult to use properly since he encounters these words as they are used in sentences within appropriate contexts which are clearly visualised. In

terms of learning strategies involving anime, he said:

If I find new word for me, I check the meaning of the word in a dictionary.

Regarding music, he pointed out two benefits which textbooks do not have.

Music gives me the chance to learn Japanese that I cannot see in textbooks but can see outside (the class).

I can learn Japanese words with music. Memorising them with textbooks is always easy to forget even if I study them again and again.

His learning strategies associated with listening to music is that:

If I find vocabulary that I can't understand while I listen to music, I usually check the meaning of the word in a dictionary.

He memorises lyrics by listening to music, and this custom helps him to find the meaning of the words when he encounters unfamiliar words in the class or during an examination.

Music lyrics are seldom forgotten. So, when I find the words which I've seen in the lyrics but forgotten its meaning, I sing a song in my head. Then, I can figure out the meaning of the word because I can see the word with sentence.

As is the case with the other two participants, it seems that his out-of-class learning occurs when he notices something, such as unfamiliar words or grammar, or the fact that he has previously encountered the word in music lyrics. This noticing then leads to certain behaviours, such as checking a dictionary or singing a song in his head, which directly relate to his learning of Japanese.

Affordances that emerge between him and anime or music are by no means only for Japanese learning, but also for fulfilling his enjoyment or interest.

I listen to Japanese music because I'm interested in it.

Furthermore, enjoyment and interest are important elements of the activities in questions that facilitate his Japanese learning.

Even just watching anime, if someone watches or listens to something for their interest, they can learn more Japanese because watching anime is not for studying but for fun.

Further insight into the importance of enjoyment and interest for his learning can be gained by considering the reason that he does not use games as a resource for his Japanese learning although he invests extensive time in playing them.

I've changed in-game language from English to Japanese once. But, I feel it was boring because I'm not exactly sure what they said.

That is, he is not able to enjoy games if the language is Japanese, and resources that he cannot enjoy do not lead to his Japanese learning.

According to Rahul, Japan has more opportunities to both input and output Japanese language compared to India. However, his way of learning Japanese has not significantly changed since learning Japanese through listening to music and watching anime also occurred when he was living in India.

4.2.3.3. Affordances Related to *Yakuwarigo* Acquisition

Figure 4.3 indicates that resources which affordances emerge both related to Japanese learning and acquisition of *yakuwarigo* for Rahul are anime and music (anime songs).

In particular, anime exposes him to *yakuwarigo*, and when he is unable to understand something, he researches it himself to clarify whose language it is and what the meaning

it has.

I really couldn't understand "sessha"(the first-person pronoun of samurai) when I saw the word for the first time in anime, I searched the word by myself.

Rahul notices not only *yakuwarigo* that he is unable to understand but also gaps that exist between information which he already has and language he encounters in anime.

When I saw anime (with subtitles), one of characters says "boku", but subtitle says "I". Then, I got confused because I was thought "I" is "watashi" in English. Then, I searched it by myself.

Music also gives him opportunities to encounter and learn *yakuwarigo*.

I have learnt many such Japanese (yakuwarigo) with music.

However, there is a possibility that one cannot understand the underlying intention of songwriters' use of *yakuwarigo*. He answered the question of whether it is possible for him to obtain some images or attributions from the word "*boku*" even when there are no visual images.

Now I can understand what kind of person the word implies. But, if it was two years ago, probably I can't…The reason why I can understand now is that I have seen a lot of characters who use that word.

From his responses, it is clear that Rahul builds his *yakuwarigo* knowledge through consuming anime and applies it to observe language usages in different contexts, such as music. The way in which he applies *yakuwarigo* knowledge helps him to learn new *yakuwarigo* and also reinforces his *yakuwarigo* knowledge.

It is also important to note that he believes that acquiring *yakuwarigo* knowledge is possible whether one is a beginner learner or an advanced learner. In his own case, he started to watch anime before he started learning Japanese, and he was able to notice the existence of *yakuwarigo* when he was close to a zero beginner level.

4.2.3.4. *Yakuwarigo* in Real Life

Rahul's opportunities for making conversation with others in Japanese are scarce since he is a self-described indoor-person and does not have a part time job. The language school is the main place in which his conversation occurs. Even though Rahul generally speaks Japanese the way that he was taught in Japanese schools, he uses three different first-pronoun persons (*watashi, boku, ore*) depending on contexts.

"*watashi*"
I use watashi in the face to face conversation context because I was taught that "boku" is informal word in a Japanese school in India.

"*boku*" and "*ore*"
I use "boku" and "ore" in text messages. "Boku" is for those who are the same age of me, and "ore" is those who are younger than me. If someone is older than me, I use "watashi".

He explained another reason for using only "*watashi*" but not "*boku*" in the face to face conversation:

When I use "boku", I get a strange feeling like "it is not me". And if I use "watashi", I think my conversation partner may think that I'm good person because the word is a polite one.

He often uses "*boku*" and "*ore*" in text messages; however, these words are not always used in text messages for everyone but rather in the text for those who are interested in

manga or anime. He reports that these people also tend to use first-person pronouns other than "*watashi*", such as "*boku*", in their replies.

4.3. Commonalities

In this chapter, the findings from the group discussion and individual interviews have been presented. Some commonalities are presented below as a summary.

・The everyday life activities on which participants spend extensive time are indoor pursuits. Many of these activities have been taken on by participants before they came to Japan and some of them help participants to learn Japanese.

・They consider Japanese formally taught (e.g., in the classroom and textbooks) differs from everyday Japanese, but Japanese that appears in manga, anime and music are more close to the kinds of language used in everyday life

・Resources which participants perceive as enjoyable products rather than as learning resources tends to facilitate their Japanese learning and *yakuwarigo* acquisition by noticing unfamiliar words or gaps between their knowledge and what they have observed.

・Manga and/or anime contribute significantly to the development of *yakuwarigo* knowledge among participants. Therefore, participants consider that other classmates who do not read manga or watch anime may not have *yakuwarigo* knowledge and *yakuwarigo* should, therefore, be taught in Japanese language classes

・Participants have some *yakuwarigo* knowledge which enables them to obtain stereotypical images or attributes associated with *yakuwarigo*, many of which seem to be similar to those images understood by native Japanese speakers and match *yakuwarigo* and the visual images of characters with considerable accuracy. However, they also have difficulties obtaining stereotyping images or attributes of speakers from examples of *yakuwarigo* which they have rarely seen in anime or manga. Additionally, they tend to rely on the first-person pronoun rather than other parts of a sentence to obtain stereotypical images of the speaker.

・They generally speak Japanese the way that they have been taught in Japanese schools,

such as *"watashi"*, while they use some different first-person pronouns depending on the context.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Two key findings derived from analysis of the participant data gathered by group discussion and individual interview are discussed in more detail here. These are (1) the ways of *yakuwarigo* acquisition, and (2) the necessity of considering teaching *yakuwarigo* in the classroom.

5.1. Ways of *Yakuwarigo* Acquisition

The possible ways of acquisition of *yakuwarigo* among the participants are discussed here based on the findings of the study examined from an ecological perspective, which (as noted earlier) treats the factors that make up their language learning systems as complementary, rather than as isolated entities.

From the findings, it is clear that *yakuwarigo* knowledge among participants is acquired only through their out-of-class learning, and a common pattern in their out-of-class learning is that they tend to avoid taking an instructional or formal approach to their Japanese learning. These learning habits are formed by their learning beliefs (Lai, 2014) and motivation. First, there is a common belief among participants that Japanese formally learnt differs somewhat from Japanese that they observe outside the classroom context. Due to this common view, they seem to prefer to choose learning resources that they believe will contain everyday Japanese. Second, resources which significantly contribute to facilitating their Japanese learning are ones perceived as providing pleasure for them. That is, the quality of their Japanese learning is heavily dependent on whether or not Japanese exposure leads to enjoyment for them. This view is in line with some researchers'

observation which emphasise the importance of interest in one's language learning (e.g., Casanave, 2012; Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Ushioda, 2011; Zimmerman, 2011). The importance of these two concepts, their beliefs and motivation, emerges from the exploration of their reasons for considering manga, anime and music as the most useful resources. All participants made the point that these resources contain (in their view) Japanese which is more similar to that found in everyday life, and found that consuming these products is really fun.

A great variety of *yakuwarigo* often appear in resources which fulfil these two conditions, the participants' learning beliefs and motivation. The participants form affordances with these resources, and the affordances allow them to take certain actions. However, even if they build affordances with same resources, the actions taken by individual participants are not always the same, since affordances emerge from the interaction between resources and individuals' abilities (van Lier, 2004). Where individuals' abilities differ, different affordances generally emerge. Despite this, there is one commonality in the participants' actions and this concerns the phenomenon of "noticing", which has been claimed by researchers (most notably Schmidt, 1990) to play an essential role in language learning. From their responses, it was clear that they are likely to notice, or pay conscious attention to, *yakuwarigo* that appears in resources and the existence of gaps between their knowledge about Japanese language and the *yakuwarigo* which they observed. This noticing, then, affords them to take subsequent actions, such as careful observation of the context in which *yakuwarigo* appears, searching by themselves or sometimes asking a Japanese friend. As a result of these actions, they are able to learn *yakuwarigo* itself as well as the stereotypical images or attributes of the characters who use these language

forms. This is in line with van Lier's (2004) point that that nature of affordances is that one affordance gives rise to further affordances. Noticing is also a crucial factor for their *yakuwarigo* acquisition process, since noticing *yakuwarigo* becomes a trigger that activates their *yakuwarigo* acquisition process. The importance of noticing as an element that facilitates one's language learning also corresponds with one finding of the study of Casanave (2012), who analysed her own learning Japanese from an ecological perspective, and with Schmidt's observation (2001) that "noticing is the first step in language building" (p. 31).

Among the resources which provide the participants with opportunities for acquisition of *yakuwarigo*, manga and anime make a huge contribution to building *yakuwarigo* knowledge among the participants. Furthermore, it seems that manga and anime play an initial role as a source of *yakuwarigo* input. Evidence for this comes from the fact that most of the *yakuwarigo* knowledge that participants displayed in the group discussion came from these two products, and the fact that they have a common view that those who do not consume both manga and anime (such as their classmates) tend to have little *yakuwarigo* knowledge. *Yakuwarigo* knowledge of participants is initially acquired through actions afforded by manga and anime, and then tends to be applied in different contexts. For example, the participants apply this knowledge to understand the *yakuwarigo* appearing in music without visual images, as well as to observe actual uses of *yakuwarigo* by Japanese speakers in real contexts and to use *yakuwarigo* themselves in their conversations. In short, the participants initially acquire *yakuwarigo* knowledge from manga and anime. This knowledge is then reinforced by their repeated consumption of these products and also by applying it in different contexts. The *yakuwarigo* acquisition

process which have been examined is visualised below (see Figure 5.1 created in reference to van Lier's representation of affordance in context, 2004, p. 96)
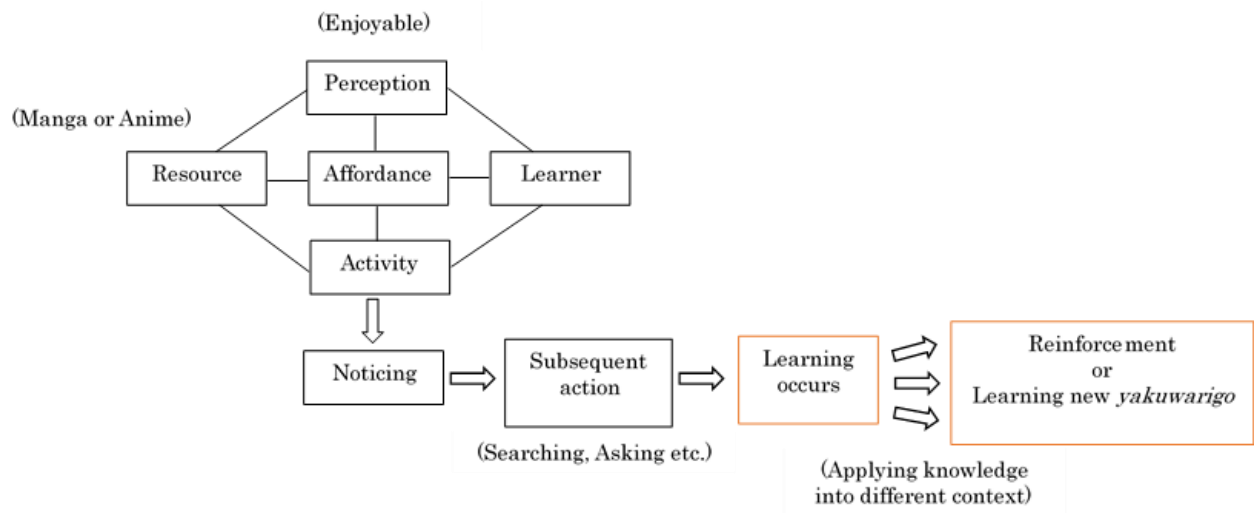

Figure 5.1. A Provisional Model of the *Yakuwarigo* Acquisition Process among Japanese Learners

The lines of Figure 5.1 show the interactions between five concepts which lead people to a certain action, while arrows indicate a possible sequence for acquisition of *yakuwarigo*. The *yakuwarigo* acquisition process for Japanese learners starts by creating affordances. These affordances, which emerge as a result of the interaction between learners' ability and possibility of actions provided by the resources (manga or anime), bring them to perceive the resources as fun and afford them the opportunity to take certain actions (e.g., reading or watching). Actions, then, offer them opportunities to notice the existence of *yakuwarigo* which lead them to take subsequent actions (searching, asking and observing). Subsequent actions help them build *yakuwarigo* knowledge. The knowledge is then applied to different contexts, and they are able to reinforce such knowledge and notice new *yakuwarigo*. This process is probably not exactly linear as Figure 5.1 suggests; for example, after the stage of learning *yakuwarigo*, learners may experience additional

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"noticing". This way of acquiring *yakuwarigo* is quite similar to the way in which Kinsui (2003) proposes that people growing up in Japan acquire these forms. As discussed earlier, Kinsui (2003) hypothesises that Japanese native speakers acquire *yakuwarigo* and reinforce it through their repeated consumption of popular culture products in their childhood. One more step to be possibly added here is that native speakers may reinforce their *yakuwarigo* knowledge as they mature by applying it in different contexts, as the participants in this study do. The difference between acquisition process among the participants and that of native Japanese speakers is that native Japanese speakers build their *yakuwarigo* knowledge implicitly in childhood as part of the process of first language acquisition that N.C. Ellis (2008) observes, while the participants, as adult learners, learn *yakuwarigo* in a more explicit manner by (for instance) checking a dictionary or asking others when they notice new *yakuwarigo* forms. The necessity of explicitness in learning *yakuwarigo* for adult learners aligns with findings that adult language learners, even very superior ones, need to pay attention to form (Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi & Moselle, 1994)

The findings of the present study illustrate that it is indeed possible for adult learners to acquire *yakuwarigo* knowledge through out-of-class Japanese learning activities. Nevertheless, there are at least two potential limitations to overcome if this is to occur, and these limitations relate to (1) resources, and (2) affordances. The former limitation is that resources which provide learners of Japanese with opportunities to learn *yakuwarigo* must contain very frequent and diverse instances of *yakuwarigo* in order to be effective. However, the number of such types of resources is limited. The latter limitation is that even if learners are able to access appropriate resources for leaning *yakuwarigo*, there is

no guarantee that they will be able to build affordances with these resources. If they are unable to build the kinds of affordances which make it possible for them to take certain actions that lead to their noticing *yakuwarig*o, subsequent stages of the acquisition process may not be activated.

5.1.1. The Possibility of Acquiring *Yakuwarigo* Knowledge Living outside Japan

Acquisition of *yakuwarigo* is possible even when learners live outside Japan. For two out of three participants, most of the everyday life activities which related to their *yakuwarigo* acquisition took place before they came to Japan. In brief, if one can access resources which contain a large number of *yakuwarigo*, particularly manga or anime, one can learn such language. This finding, however, differs from one of the findings of previous research conducted by Shukuri et al. (2015) that amount of consumption of Japanese manga and anime among learners of Japanese living in Russia had no correlation with the results of the matching test. One of the possible reasons for this inconsistent result might relate to the language of manga and anime. Even though it cannot be determined because of a lack of information, the participants of the previous research may have read manga or watched anime in a language other than Japanese. If so, acquisition of *yakuwarigo* would not occur.

5.1.2. Relations between Acquisition of *Yakuwarigo* and one's Japanese Level

Another important finding is that one can begin to acquire *yakuwarigo* regardless of one's Japanese level. Interestingly, the participants actually reported noticing the existence of *yakuwarigo* through consuming manga or anime at the time when they were unable to understand much Japanese at all. Additionally, the belief (shared by two out of three

participants) that people always develop thorough practice and persistence supports this view. In the individual interviews, two out of three participants independently used a gaming analogy to explain this learning belief, saying that the level one hero cannot beat the level five enemy, but if the hero keeps fighting the enemy, he is certainly able to become level five. In other words, the level one hero can accumulate some experience through fighting even if he could not beat the enemy. In short, even if learners cannot understand all of words in front of them while consuming manga, anime or other resources, noticing and learning of *yakuwarigo* takes place through their engagement with these resources as long as they persist.

5.2. Consideration of Teaching *Yakuwarigo* in the Classroom

The findings of the present study suggest several reasons for considering teaching *yakuwarigo* in the classroom. The first reason is that the in-class learning could complement out-of-class learning of *yakuwarigo*. The participants are currently able to acquire *yakuwarigo* only through their out-of-class learning. Recent research highlights the fact that out-of-class learning often has positive impact on language learning, such as providing authentic input and interaction opportunities, improvements in confidence and motivation (Nunan & Richards 2015), and development of skills of using multimodal learning resources and communication strategies (Richards, 2015). Benson and Reinders (2011) have therefore emphasised the necessity of focusing more on out-of-class learning. The participants' out-of-class learning, in fact, seems to have brought great benefits for their Japanese and *yakuwarigo* learning. However, there are at least two limitations associated with learning *yakuwarigo* without any formal in-class input: (1) the range of *yakuwarigo* that learners can encounter, and (2) the potential formation of incorrect or

incomplete *yakuwarigo* knowledge.

The former limitation is that based on the process of *yakuwarigo* acquisition among the participants (see Figure 5.1), it is difficult (if not impossible) to build associations between *yakuwarigo* and stereotypical images of characters that they unable to encounter in manga or anime. As evidence of this, in the group discussion, the participants were confronted with the difficulty of obtaining characters' attributes from *yakuwarigo* of a rural dweller and a butler, as the manga and anime genres that they prefer tend not to feature these characters. That is, for even those learners who enjoy manga and anime, there are some characters and *yakuwarigo* which they are not likely to encounter owing to their preferred genre.

The second limitation is that acquisition of *yakuwarigo* among learners of Japanese could be influenced by their interpretation; therefore, there are possibility that one might build incorrect or incomplete *yakuwarigo* knowledge. From the acquisition process of the participants, one way of building *yakuwarigo* knowledge is to observe the context in which *yakuwarigo* appears and interpret whose *yakuwarigo* it is based on the observation. If Japanese learners' interpretation of *yakuwarigo* differs from stereotypes that most Japanese share, they might acquire incorrect *yakuwarigo* knowledge. For example, for two out of three participants, the *yakuwarigo* of a rural dweller evoked images of a child. The reason for this is that one participant has seen a child character who use "*ora*" as the first-person in some anime, while the other participant had seen a child whose parents seemed to be rich, and the child had used "*ora*" in front of the participant at his workplace. These observations may be the cause of the persistence of child-like images in the

participant's' minds when confronted with the *yakuwarigo* of a rural dweller, as they might interpret "*ora*" as *yakuwarigo* of a child based on what they have seen. Based on this example, it can be predicted that Japanese learners might place undue emphasis on a particular element of a sentence construction when learning *yakuwarigo* on their own. The participants in fact had a tendency to regard the first-person pronoun as more important than other grammatical elements. In the *yakuwarigo* of a rural dweller considered above, they focused only on the first-person "*ora*" but paid less attention to end of the sentence, "*(sun)deruda*" which often projects stereotyped images of speakers. As another example, one participant obtained a male image from a well-off girl *yakuwarigo*. In the discussion that followed the completion of the task, it became clear that this was because he only focused on the first-person "*watakushi*" which is not gender-specific. However, attention to the end of the sentence "*masunoyo*" would have provided further information as to the stereotypical attributes of the character, as well as her gender. This tendency to focus only on the initial part of sentence might be a cause of formation of incorrect *yakuwarigo* knowledge among Japanese learners.

Even though two issues discussed above can be seen as limitations for the case of acquiring *yakuwarigo* by learner selves, in-class learning can complement the kind of learning that takes place outside the classroom. Teaching *yakuwarigo* in the classroom helps learners to encounter *yakuwarigo* and its speakers which they are unable to see in manga or anime due to their preferred genre, or that they have not noticed although they have encountered. Additionally, it can help to fill in the gaps between *yakuwarigo* knowledge among native speakers and Japanese learners since *yakuwarigo* instruction can provide them with opportunities to test and confirm their knowledge about

yakuwarigo that they have built by themselves. *Yakuwarigo* can be seen as a type of pragmatic knowledge in that it implicitly conveys one's identities or attributes through language to others, and Schmidt (1993) has advocated the necessity of instruction to enhance pragmatic knowledge among language learners since pragmatic features are often not salient for them. Although consensus has yet to be reached which types of instruction is most effective (R. Ellis, 2008), the effectiveness of instruction in the case of L2 pragmatic development is supported by some studies (e.g., Alcón Soler, 2005; Lyster, 1994; Rajabia, Azizifara & Gowhary, 2015; Takimoto, 2006; Tateyama, 2001). Introducing *yakuwarigo* instruction in the Japanese classroom can also reduce the tendency of learners to focus too narrowly on a particular element of the sentence, and can build awareness of the importance of other parts.

The second potential benefit of teaching *yakuwarigo* in the Japanese class is due to the participants' perception in terms of *yakuwarigo*. The field of Japanese education often regards the kind of Japanese that frequently appears in manga or anime as merely fictional language (Kinsui, 2011) or expresses concerns about possible negative impacts on Japanese learning (Kumano, 2011). On the other hand, the participants in the present study expressed a very different view, believing that *yakuwarigo* is more similar to the kind of everyday Japanese which they are able to observe outside the classroom environment than is the Japanese which they are taught inside the classroom. Even though this is only three Japanese learners' perception, it is worthy of consideration since this is the common perception among these three learners who are familiar with the kind of Japanese which appears both in manga/ anime and in the Japanese class, and who currently live in Japan. Hence, the claim that *yakuwarigo* is inauthentic language often

used for explaining inappropriateness of teaching *yakuwarigo* inside the classroom context seems to lose its authority.

The third reason for looking at bringing *yakuwarigo* into the classroom relates to the identity of Japanese learners. From the findings of the present study, it appears that the Japanese class has a significant impact not only on the ways of speaking Japanese that learners adopt, but also on the ways in which they express aspects of their identity. The Japanese first person forms generally convey images related to particular character types and are therefore used as a tool for expressing speakers' identity to others. However, many male learners of Japanese use "*watashi*" when referring to themselves even in contexts where native Japanese male speakers might not use this form (Kodama, 2016). Even the participants in this study, who have some familiarity with alternative forms, commented that they use "*watashi*" in most situations, and attributed this to the language to which they were exposed in their classes. Rahul claimed to have made a deliberate choice to use "*watashi*" when referring to himself, as he wished to project an identity of a polite person, and was concerned that "*boku*" would convey a less polite image. Nevertheless, his choice of first-person pronoun was influenced by his language class because his idea that "*boku*" is impolite was first fostered by a Japanese language teacher. Another example comes from Kevin, who feels underestimated by native Japanese speakers due to his frequent use of "*watashi*"; despite this, he has continually introduced such first-person pronoun forms regardless of context. These cases demonstrate the Japanese class having significant impact on language choice of learners and support the claim to some degree that Japanese learners are conditioned to express the identity of "Japanese learner" (Thompson, 2010) by teaching what amounts to *yakuwarigo* of language learner.

Therefore, Japanese teachers and curriculum developers need to be aware of their powerful influence on the way of speaking Japanese of their learners, and the possible consequence that learners have limited language resources to express aspects of their identities other than Japanese learners. The field of Japanese education should help learners to be able to express their identities in ways chosen by themselves depending on the context, and in-class learning of *yakuwarigo* has a potential role in fulfilling this goal.

The fourth reason is that *yakuwarigo* is an important form of knowledge for Japanese learners seeking to enter the Japanese community. The participants all argued in favour of teaching *yakuwarigo* inside the classroom since such language is everyday Japanese. By extension, those who are unable to understand *yakuwarigo* will find it hard to participate in the Japanese community. Some debate in the field of Japanese education focuses on whether *yakuwarigo* is fictional language or real language use. Nevertheless, I believe that the most important issue associated with *yakuwarigo* for the field of Japanese education is not its reality, but the key role in communication that *yakuwarigo* knowledge plays among Japanese speakers. *Yakuwarigo* is a form of stereotyping; therefore, native Japanese speakers are able to access and use such knowledge wherever and whenever they want (e.g., joking face-to-face with friends, or communicating in chatrooms or on other forms of social media). Furthermore, *yakuwarigo* appears in many Japanese products in addition to music, manga, and anime, such as television programs, advertisements in the print and electronic media, and movies. Japanese classes therefore need to prepare learners to participate in the Japanese community by providing them with opportunities to acquire at least passive *yakuwarigo* knowledge.

The last reason for including *yakuwarigo* as part of the language curriculum is the fact that some Japanese learners do not build affordances between themselves and manga or anime, which the present research suggests are key resources for building *yakuwarigo* knowledge. While the participants did engage with these resources out of choice, they all noted that many of their fellow students did not access or create affordances with these resources due to cultural or individual preference issues. As discussed above, *yakuwarigo* is an important part of the Japanese language if one is to be able to express an identity in Japanese, and participate in a range of activities in Japanese society. Thus, the Japanese class needs to play a role in providing *yakuwarigo* learning opportunities to those who are not able to acquire it by themselves.

Chapter 6:   Conclusion

This qualitative research was conducted to identify the depth of knowledge and the processes underlying the acquisition of *yakuwarigo* through an in-depth exploration of three learners of Japanese in a JSL context. An ecological approach was applied which treated as one set the range of variables around the participants that comprise their language learning system. The final chapter summarises key findings of the study, followed by reference to the study's limitations and recommendation of further research.

6.1.   Key Findings of the Study

The key findings of the study are set out below to address the two research questions (the depth of *yakuwarigo* knowledge and its acquisition process) and to support arguments in favour of teaching *yakuwarigo* in the classroom.

All three participants demonstrated evidence of abilities to obtain some stereotypical character images or attributes from *yakuwarigo*, which seemed in many respects to be similar to the kinds of associations that native Japanese users would make. In addition, they were able to match *yakuwarigo* samples with particular types of speakers with considerable accuracy. Nevertheless, these abilities are difficult to extend to *yakuwarigo* which the participants had not encountered (or at least had not noticed) in manga or anime. A tendency to rely excessively on the first-person pronoun as a clue to the attributes or images of the speaker was also identified.

Analysis of the data from the matching task, group discussion and individual interviews

suggests that knowledge related to *yakuwarigo* among the participants was acquired through five stages: (1) the participants create affordances between themselves and manga and/or anime that bring them to perceive these resources as fun and afford them the opportunity to take certain actions; (2) these actions provide the participants with opportunities to notice *yakuwarigo* which appear in the products: (3) the noticing of *yakuwarigo* leads them to take substantial actions (e.g., checking the meanings in dictionaries, asking Japanese speakers and/or carefully observing the context in which the *yakuwarigo* appears): (4) As a result of these substantial actions, the participants are able to acquire *yakuwarigo* knowledge; (5) the *yakuwarigo* knowledge is applied in different contexts, and the participants are then able to reinforce such knowledge and notice new *yakuwarigo*. These findings are captured in the provisional model of *yakuwarigo* acquisition set out in Figure 5.1.

In addition to the two key findings above, the outcomes of this research support arguments in favour of teaching *yakuwarigo* in the classroom. There are at least five reasons for this: (1) the limitations of learning *yakuwarigo* exclusively through independent out-of-class learning (including the limited range of *yakuwarigo* that learners can encounter and the potential for formation of incorrect or incomplete *yakuwarigo* knowledge); (2) the common view among participants that *yakuwarigo* is more similar to everyday Japanese than is the Japanese taught in the class or textbooks; (3) the importance of helping learners of Japanese to express their identities (other than "Japanese learner" identities) in a variety of communicative contexts, (4) preparation of Japanese learners to enter and participate in various activities in the broader Japanese community, and (5) the fact that not all learners of Japanese seem to be able to build *yakuwarigo* knowledge by themselves.

6.2. Limitations of the Study

The present research is able to provide some clear findings. Despite this, there are also some limitations. One limitation is the number of participants. This qualitative research was conducted as exploratory research with three Japanese learners living in Japan. The findings of the research are not, therefore, generalisable to others, and there are likely to be other possible ways of acquiring of *yakuwarigo* knowledge other than those that have emerged from the present research. This research intentionally recruited Japanese learners who were interested in anime or manga in order to find the participants who have a certain *yakuwarigo* knowledge. It is therefore possible that this selection criterion might have influenced the data which the researcher could obtain. Another limitation is that this paper has claimed that the *yakuwarigo* knowledge among the participants had some similarities and differences when compared with that of native Japanese. However, this estimation relies to a considerable extent on sources such as the subjective judgement of the researcher (who is a native speaker of Japanese) or the internet resources, since existing research conducted to investigate *yakuwarigo* knowledge among native Japanese speakers could not be found. This fact affects the validity of the study to a certain extent. All research data was obtained in Japanese from learners of Japanese, and some errors were able to be found in their Japanese. The participants' ability to respond in a nuanced way, as well as the researcher's interpretation of the participants' responses would thus be somewhat less than perfect. Finally, even though data of the participants were carefully analysed, the analysis process was done by one researcher. Different findings may emerge if other researchers were to analyse the same data. This research, however, introduced an ecological approach as a framework and different analysis methods, data coding and crafting profiles, which could ensure the reliability of data analysis to a certain extent.

6.3. Recommendations for Further Research

Some further studies can be recommended based on the present research findings. Expanding the potential participants from learners of Japanese who are interested in manga or anime to include those who are not able or willing to create affordances with these resources may complement one of the limitations of the present study. Furthermore, designing and implementing research based on the present research findings, in particular the provisional model of the *yakuwarigo* acquisition process (see Figure 5.1), with larger numbers or other groups of learners will help to determine the generalisability of the findings of this research beyond the three cases investigated here. Focusing in detail on participants' socialisation experiences in the Japanese community would contribute to a deeper understanding of their living environment and variables impacting upon their language learning other than those which the present study has revealed. In terms of further research which is more directly related to the Japanese education field, investigation of the attitudes and beliefs of Japanese language educators regarding the teaching of *yakuwarigo* will help to understand more clearly the current conditions of the field. The establishment of innovative *yakuwarigo* teaching methods for learners of Japanese and investigation of the actual impact of this instruction on their language learning and more broadly on their ability to engage with their chosen communities through Japanese, would also be valuable. Language learnt by learners in language classes must be relevant to their learning purpose and even their future lives (Onzuka, 2011), and language teachers should consider their learners not simply as "Japanese learners" but as "people" (Ushioda, 2011). *Yakuwarigo* has the potential to play a role in bridging the gap between the language classroom and the real world.

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Appendices

Appendix 1:   Ethics Approval

RE: HS Ethics Application - Approved (5201700490)(Con/Met)

Dear Dr Roger,

Re: "The Degree and Acquisition of Yakuwarigo knowledge Among Japanese learners in JSL Context" (5201700490)

Thank you very much for your response.   Your response has addressed the issues raised by the Faculty of Human Sciences Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee and approval has been granted, effective 6th June 2017.   This email constitutes ethical approval only.

This research meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). The National Statement is available at the following web site:

https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/book/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research

The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:

Dr Peter Roger
Mr Yasunori Kato

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1.   The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).

2.   Approval will be for a period of five (5) years subject to the provision of annual reports.

Progress Report 1 Due: 6th June 2018
Progress Report 2 Due: 6th June 2019
Progress Report 3 Due: 6th June 2020
Progress Report 4 Due: 6th June 2021
Final Report Due: 6th June 2022

NB. If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. If the project has been discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are also required to submit a Final Report for the project.

Progress reports and Final Reports are available at the following website:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/current_research_staff/human_research_ethics/resources

3.   If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Sub-Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).

4.   All amendments to the project must be reviewed and approved by the Sub-Committee

before implementation. Please complete and submit a Request for Amendment Form available at the following website:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/current_research_staff/human_research_ethics/managing_appro ved_research_projects

5.   Please notify the Sub-Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

6.   At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University. This information is available at the following websites:

http://www.mq.edu.au/policy

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/current_research_staff/human_research_ethics/managing_appro ved_research_projects

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project it is your responsibility to provide the Macquarie University's Research Grants Management Assistant with a copy of this email as soon as possible. Internal and External funding agencies will not be informed that you have approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Management Assistant has received a copy of this email.

If you need to provide a hard copy letter of approval to an external organisation as evidence that you have approval, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Secretariat at the address below.

Please retain a copy of this email as this is your official notification of ethics approval.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Naomi Sweller
Chair
Faculty of Human Sciences
Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee

FHS Ethics
Faculty of Human Sciences Ethics
C5C-17 Wallys Walk L3
Macquarie University, NSW 2109, Australia
T: +61 2 9850 4197 | http://www.research.mq.edu.au/
Ethics Forms and Templates
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/current_research_staff/human_research_ethics/resources
The Faculty of Human Sciences acknowledges the traditional custodians of the Macquarie University Land, the Wattamattageal clan of the Darug nation, whose cultures and customs have nurtured and continue to nurture this land since the Dreamtime. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

Appendix 2:   Participant's Consent Form (English Version)

Department of Linguistics
Faculty of Human Science
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY   NSW   2109

Phone: +61 (2) 9850 8774
Fax: +61 (2) 9850 9199
Email: peter.roger@mq.edu.au

Chief Investigator's / Supervisor's Name & Title: Dr Peter Roger

Participant Information and Consent Form

Name of Project: Acquisition of *yakuwarigo* knowledge among Japanese learners in a JSL Context

You are invited to participate in a study of particular types of Japanese language that tend to appear commonly in Japanese manga or anime. The purpose of the study is to investigate the degree of knowledge about such language that learners of Japanese have, and how they acquire this knowledge.

The study is being conducted by Yasunori Kato (Tel: +61 466 002 032, yasunori.kato@students.mq.edu.au) as being conducted to meet the requirements of Master of Research in the Department of Linguistics at Macquarie University, under the supervision of Dr Peter Roger (Tel: +61 2 9850 9650, peter.roger@mq.edu.au) of the Department of Linguistics.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to attend one 60-90 minute group discussion that will explore the depth of knowledge that you and other participants have about the kinds of Japanese language that frequently appear in manga and anime. This session will include a short (10 minute) activity where participants will be asked to match characters and their associated spoken language as preparations for group discussion. After the group discussion, you will be also asked to participate in an individual interview of 45-60 minutes' duration to discuss your own strategies for learning more colloquial/casual forms of Japanese. You are encouraged to bring along examples of the kinds of resources or media that you find helpful in learning these features of the language. The group discussion will be video-recorded, and also both group discussion and individual interviews will be audio-recorded for the purpose of later analysis as part of the research.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential, except as required by law.   No individual will be identified in any publication of the results. Only the supervisor, Dr Peter Roger and co-researcher, Yasunori Kato, will have access to collected data. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to you on request by email.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

I, _____ have read and understand the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's Name: _____
(Block letters)

Participant's Signature: _____ Date:
_____

Investigator's Name: _____
(Block letters)

Investigator's Signature: _____ Date: _____

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics & Integrity (telephone +61 2 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au) or Masamichi Washitake who is the local contact person (telephone 0561-73-111; email washitak@dpc.agu.ac.jp) Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

(PARTICIPANT'S COPY)

Appendix 3:   Participants' Consent Form (Japanese Version)

マッコーリ大学大学院人間科学部言語学学科

Tel: +61（2）9850 8774

Fax: +61（2）9850 9199

Email: peter.roger@mq.edu.au

指導教官　Dr ピーター・ロジャー

<div align="center">

研究参加に関する説明および同意書

「日本語学習者の役割語の知識とその習得に関する研究」

</div>

この研究は、日本に住んでいる日本語学習者が日本のマンガやアニメに出てくる日本語（役割語）についてどのぐらいの知識があり、また、それをどのように習得するかを調査することが目的です。

この研究は、加藤康憲（Tel: +61 466 002 032, yasunori.kato@students.mq.edu.au）により行なわれ、また、言語学学部の Dr ピーター・ロジャー（+61 2 9850 9650, peter.roger@mq.edu.au）の監督の下、研究修士課程（Master of Research）の一環である修士論文の為に行なわれるものです。

研究に参加していただく場合、最初にグループディスカッションの準備として、10 分程度のマッチングアクティビティー（絵とセリフの組み合わせ）を行なった後、60～90 分のグループディスカッションに移ります。このディスカッションでは、日本のマンガやアニメに出てくる日本語（役割語）についての参加者の知識を調べるために行われます。グループディスカッションの後、45～60 分の個人インタビューを行ないます。このインタビューでは参加者がどのように、それらの日本語を習得するのかを調べることを目的としています。インタビューでは参加者の日本語の勉強方法を教えていただくと共に、参加者にお持ちいただいた日本語学習に役に立つと思うご自身の使用教材についてもお話を伺います。グループディスカッション、個人インタビューでの会話は、後のデーターの分析のため IC レコーダーで録音させていただきます。また、グループディスカッションについては、それ以外にビデオカメラを用いて録画させていただきます。この場合も後のデーター分析の際、誰の発話なのかを確認するために使われます。

この研究で得た個人に関するデーターは法律で求められる以外は内密に行われます。また、論文の出版の際にも個人が特定されることはありません。これらのデーターへのアクセスは指導教官である Dr ピーター・ロジャーと共同研究者である加藤康憲のみとし、第三者へ渡ることはありません。研究結果については、希望される方には Email でお送りすることもできます。

この研究へは自由参加となっています。強制参加ではありませんし、一度参加を決めた後、理由なく途中で辞めることもできます。それによって不利益を被ることはありません。

_____

私_____は、上記の内容を理解し、納得しました。一度参加を決めた後に途中で辞退することになっても不利益を被ることはないことを確認した上でこの研究に参加します。自分用のコピーも受け取りました。

参加者氏名　　_____

参加者の署名　_____

日付：　　　年　　　月　　　日

研究者の氏名　_____

研究者の署名　_____

日付：　　　年　　　月　　　日

この研究に関する研究倫理についてはマッコーリ大学研究倫理審査委員会により認可されています。もし研究倫理等に関する問題が発生した場合は研究倫理公正委員長（+61 2 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au）、または現地の連絡先である鷲嶽正道（0561-73-111; email washitak@dpc.agu.ac.jp）までご連絡ください。頂いた全ての苦情は内密に処理・調査された後、評価結果が届くようになっています。

(参加者用)

Appendix 4:   Task Sheet

<u>マンガ・アニメによく 現^{あらわ}れる日本語^{にほんご}(役割語^{やくわりご})のエクササイズシート</u>

1.   下^{した}のセリフを読んでください。どんなキャラクターがそのセリフを言いましたか。そのキャラクターのイメージを 表^{ひょう}の真ん中^{まなか}の空白^{くうはく}(イメージ)に書^かいてください。イメージはあなた自身^{じしん}が 考^{かんが}えたものでも、例^{れい}にあるイメージから選^{えら}んだものでもどちらでも 構^{かま}いません。数^{かず}はいくつでもいいです。

子供^{こども}、若者^{わかもの}、としより、男性^{だんせい}、女性^{じょせい}、子供っぽい、大人^{おとな}っぽい、 頭^{あたま}がいい、頭が悪^{わる}い、 上品^{じょうひん}、下品^{げひん}、都会^{とかい}の人、田舎^{いなか}の人、短気^{たんき}、辛抱強^{しんぼうづよ}い、まじめ、不^ふまじめ、お金持^{かねも}ち、貧乏^{びんぼう}、親切^{しんせつ}、不親切^{ふしんせつ}、活発^{かっぱつ}、おとなしい、やさしい、こわい

	セリフ	イメージ	絵
1	僕^{ぼく}はここに住^すんでるんだよ。		
2	わしはここに住んでおるんじゃ。		
3	おらはここに住んでるだ。		
4	あたしはここに住んでるのよ。		
5	せっしゃはここに住んでおる。		
6	わたくしはここに住んでますのよ。		
7	わたくしめはここに住んでいるのでございます。		
8	おれはここに住んでるんだぜ。		

2.　下のキャラクターに合うセリフを1枚目の表から選び、表の一番右の空白（絵）にアルファベットを入れてください（各キャラクターに合うセリフは一つです）。
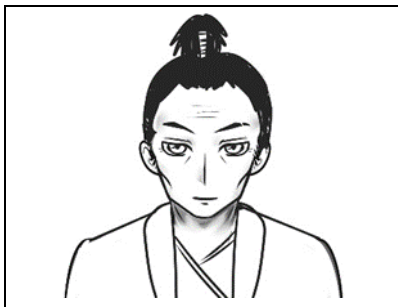
(A)
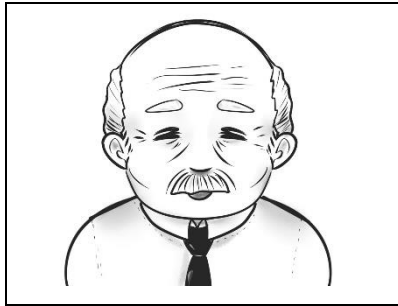
(B)

(C)
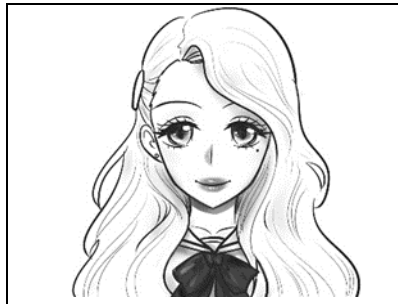
(D)

(E)

Appendix 5: Summarised Data Generated by the Task and Group Discussion

1. Boy/ *Boku wa koko ni sunderundayo*/ visual image: D	
Images & attributes	Young people, male, child, childish
Reasons for above images	- *"Boku"* is used by mostly males and young people. - "*Boku*" sounds a little childish. - "*Boku*" is used by young people.
Information sources	- The sentence can be seen in anime, manga and real situations too.
Comments on the visual image	All participants correctly matched *yakuwarigo* to the visual image. - When I saw the sentence without a picture, I thought the person was a little older than the picture, but when I saw the picture, I thought this was the one. - The main character of manga always uses "*boku*" and this picture looks the same. - I had the same images with and without a picture. He is not a bad person, so "*boku*" matches well

2. Elderly male/ *Washi wa koko ni sundeorunja*/ visual image: A	
Images & attributes	elderly person, countryside person, female
Reasons for above images	- If the speaker uses "*washi*" and "*orunja*", it doesn't sound like a child or a young person. - "*Orunja*" is an old word which countryside people use. - "*Washi*" "*ja*" and "*koko ni oru*" are used by a female who forgets things easily. - "*Orunja*" is used by elderly people in anime.
Information sources	- In anime and manga, it is used by an elderly person.
Comments on the visual image	All participants correctly matched *yakuwarigo* to the visual image. - The clothes do not match with the image, but otherwise it matches. - At first, I questioned whether the person would use "*washi*" because he seems to be wearing the company clothes. - It matches exactly with my image. The hair also matches.

3. Rural dweller / *Ora wa koko ni sunderuda*/ visual image: N/A	
Images & attributes	Young people, male, child, childish
Reasons for above images	- "*Ora*" leads to the above images.
Information	- I have little knowledge about it, but I heard "*ora*" at my part-time work. A child

sources	whose parents might be rich used "*ora*" when the child had a family quarrel with a parent in my workplace.
	- In anime, generally young and lazy people use it.
	- *Goku* always uses "*ora*" instead of "*watashi*". In any anime "*ora*" is used by males.
	- I don't know much about "*ora*", but when I say "*ora*", it sounds similar to "*ore*" (short phoneme) so I thought the image of "*ora*" is similar to "*ore*".

4. Girl/ *Atashi wa koko ni sunderunoyo*/ visual image: B

Images & attributes	female, kind, patient, gentle
Reasons for above images	- "*Atashi*" and "*sun deru noyo*" leads to above images - When I say it aloud it, I feel gentle.
Information sources	- In anime "*atashi*" is always used by females. - In both anime and real life this is used by female. - In the movie "*Kimi no na wa* (Your name)", there is a scene where the body of the main heroine (Mitsuha) is changed that of the main character (Taki). Mitsuha uses the wrong first persons (such as "*watashi*" and "*atashi*") which Taki does not generally use in front of Taki's friends, and then she hastily tries to find the correct one. From this scene, "*atashi*" is not for a male person's pronoun but rather for a female one.
Comments on the visual image	A participant who matched *yakuwarigo* to the visual image C (wrong answer) - "*Atashi*" sounds very feminine, and a visual image of character C is more feminine than B. Participants who matched *yakuwarigo* to the visual image B (correct answer) - "*Atashi*" is used by a person who is around 15 years old, so B fits. - It is usually used by female students, so B is correct.

5. Samurai/ *Sessha wa koko ni sundeoru*/ visual image: E

Images & attributes	Serious, male, *sengoku jidai* ("Age of Warring States"; c. 1467 – c. 1603), samurai, *Ruro ni Kenshin*
Reasons for above images	- "*Sessha*" is used by samurai. - "*Sessha*" is an old word and often used by samurai.
Information sources	- In anime, "*sessha*" is only used by samurai, such as Onepiece and Ruro ni Kenshin. - "*Sessha*" is used a lot in Sengoku basara amine.
Comments on the visual image	All participants correctly matched *yakuwarigo* to the visual image. - I imagined a scarier person, but when I saw the samurai picture, I got it. - *Sengoku jidai* people have *chonmage* (topknot)

6. Well-off girl/ *Watakushi wa koko ni sundemasunoyo*/ visual image: C

Images	Serious, elegant, kind, maid, smart, city person, male

& attributes	
Reasons for above images	- Not "*watashi*" but "*watakushi*" is used and also masu-form is used (which makes the impression of serious and elegant). - Maids are serious and they often use "*watakushi*". - It is very polite, so the person is not from countryside. In addition, this kind of person is the one who has a leadership in the class.
Information sources	- In anime, many characters use the plain-form, but if this kind of characters appears, they are usually serious. - In anime, maids use this kind of language. - In Japanese anime, a female leader of the class speaks in this way.
Comments on the visual image	A participant who matched *yakuwarigo* to the visual image B (wrong answer) - The visual image of character B is a little childish and does not look serious, so the image doesn't match this one. However, C matches "*atashi*" (so B was left over). Participants who matched *yakuwarigo* to the visual image C (correct answer) - (when seeing *yakuwarigo* of well-off girl) I imagined a male character who is like the president of the student council because in my opinion, those who use polite language are often male characters. But, when I saw the pictures, I realised this image (of well-off girl) matched with this (*yakuwarigo* of well-off girl) although it was different from my image - I didn't find any maid images in this picture, but when I saw this face, the person seemed a kind person (so I chose C).

7. Butler/ *Watakushime wa koko ni sundeirunodegozaimasu*/ visual image: N/A

Images & attributes	Mature, serious, elegant, rich, elderly person, patient, egoist
Reasons for above images	- As this is very polite language, it sounds like the person thinks of herself/himself as a higher status person than others. - Because the language is very polite, the person who uses this kind of language seems very calm and patient. Young people don't use it. - "*Degozaimasu*" is used by a serious person who does everything for his/her boss, just like s/he can die for the boss.
Information sources	- I have seen characters who use this kind of language in anime. - It is similar to the language used by a mother of Mr Maruo in anime called "*Chibi maruko chan*". It is a bit different from the language used by other people.

8. Scrapper/ *Ore wa koko ni sunderundaze*/ visual image: N/A

Images & attributes	Short-tempered, lazy/not serious, active, young people, male, stupid/not smart, scary, vulgar, countryside people,

Reasons for above images	- People don't usually use the suffix word "daze". "*ore*" and "*daze*" are used by rough people. - I have an impression that "*ore*" and "*daze*" are used by bad people, such as stupid and young males. - "*Daze*" is used by a short-tempered person. For example, it is used by countryside people who don't know much about life and they think they are the smartest in the narrow world. Those people seem to be more short-tempered.
Information sources	- Characters who use this kind of language have been seen in manga (e.g., Assassination Classroom), anime and movies. - The bad leader from the countryside was using it in anime. There are also used in *Sengoku basara*.